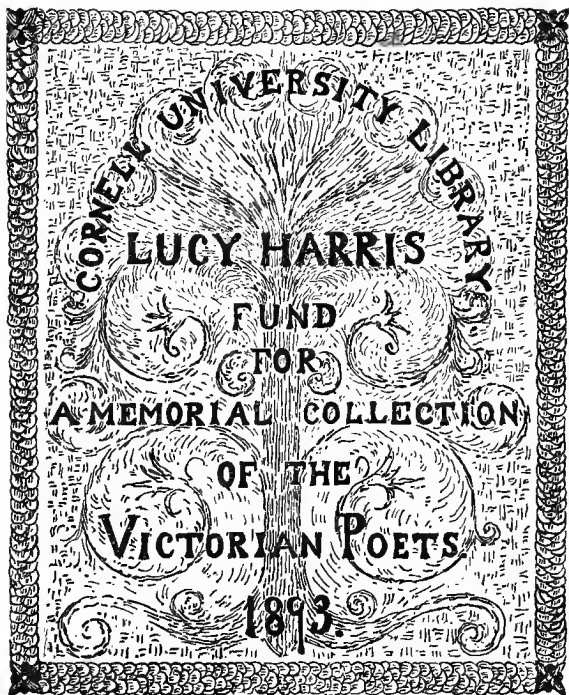


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THE DERWENT VALLEY

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

ALEXANDER BARRASS.



NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE :

PRINTED BY J. M. CARR, CITY PRINTING WORKS, 21, LOW FRIAR STREET.

1887.

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Preface.

THE reception of books, like that of individuals, depends a great deal on the manner in which they are introduced to the parties with whom they are desirous of becoming acquainted. Hence the necessity of writing, if not a lengthy, an exceedingly courteous and explanatory preface, in which the new comer may unriddle himself somewhat, and divulge the import of his mission.

The following pages have employed me, incidentally, for about five years, and are the first-fruits of an earnest love awakened by the Valley whose name the first Poem bears. In their composition I have aimed at self-improvement, as much as self-amusement, and at the useful as much as the ornamental; and, for this purpose, I have added notes to the longer Poem, which will not only enable the reader to appreciate its historical element, but to pick his way to places of interest should he visit the Vale.

Those of my readers who are acquainted with "*Ryan's History of Shotley Spa*," and that beautiful little volume of "*Historical and Descriptive Poems*" and Notes, by my friend, Mr. JOSHUA LAX, of Shotley Bridge, may not find *much* new matter in my historical and legendary contribution to this subject; but they will find *a few* things here which are not to be found in either of the above-mentioned works. And, whenever I have been compelled to traverse the same ground

with them, I have handled the facts in my own way, and impressed the material with what originality I possess.

To the critical portion of my readers, I have only to say that my Book may have many blemishes; but, after stating that I have never been at school since I was nine years of age, and that I never saw a grammar until I was nineteen, is it too much to hope—inhuman as this fraternity sometimes is—that they will have sufficient good nature to excuse what their good sense may see amiss?

To Mr. JOSHUA LAX, whose rare abilities and genial heartedness have made his name a household word on the Derwent, and who placed in my hands, "*Ryan's History of Shotley Spa*," and his own unpublished Paper on the "*Antiquities of the Derwent Valley*;" and to Mr. JOHN ROWELL WALLER, who encouraged me in my poetical efforts, my especial thanks are due.

And now I submit my Book to the hands of the public, and especially to their hands who bear "the heat and burden of the day," in the hope that it may fill, if not with thought, with harmless employment, the vacant moments that come after toil.

ALEXANDER BARRASS.

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THE DERWENT VALLEY.



CANTO FIRST.



DEDICATED TO MY MOTHER.

Dedication.

My Mother! from the morning of my days
Thy hand hath held the sceptre of my heart,
And guided all the boy's impulsive ways
With that deep love whose memory shall impart
A joy that shall eternally exert
O'er heart and soul the magic of its power:
A joy which in the breast 'tis thrown athwart
Shall shine unclouded till the latest hour,
And wreath the brow of Death with Hope's immortal flower!

O! had thine eye refused its guiding light,
Thy lips their counsel and important cheer,
How had I groaned beneath my being's blight,
And earth had held no charms to hold me here!
But I have had thee ever smiling near
To guard my pathway like an earthly god!
And when the winds were high and storms were drear,
And waters deep and life incessant plod,
To aid and hand me up the way the wise have trod!

And hence howe'er the Siren's music flowed
To lull my spirit into guilty sleep,
Thy tender toil on my young heart bestowed,
Still pointed me the path I was to keep,
And toiling for the harvest I shall reap,
From best heart-purpose to the highest given,
Have pressed my progress thus far up the steep,
To pluck some fruit—to have my fingers riven!
To suffer and forgive—inflict and be forgiven!

Then let me weave thy name into my song
And bind the garland 'round thine honoured brow!
For *here* nor ambushed worm the flowers among,
Nor foetid adulation, nor the hue
Of that detested mimic of the true,
Life-permeating love, infests the line!—
The praise is faithful and the meed is due:
For who hath loved me with a love like thine,
Or who enthroned so high in this poor heart of mine?

Friend of my heart, and guardian of my days!
However mean th' unpolished verse may be;
Howe'er it wake the voice of blame or praise,
My best, my surest Patron is in thee.
For in the days of dawning memory,
Ere life's young morn had broadened into day,
Or while I prattled on thy parent knee,
Or danced my jocund round of childish play,
From thy sweet lips I learned my rudimentary lay.

Thy boy's rude lines are thine! For they are warm
With that pure life thou gavest; and have been,
To some choice hearts, a salutary charm,
And shall not mar the stranger's mirth, I ween.
Though other bards and loftier swathe the sheen
Of vale and plain in lays that humble this,
Was it for me to wade a mazy green
That all the best and brightest beauties kiss,
And hide within my heart my ravishment of bliss?

No! Thou who tuned my heart to gratitude,
Told me that to be grateful, was to be
A wise partaker of the highest good:
And Mother! I have not dishonoured thee,
But acted out thy counsel. There may be
A shadow in my valley, and a pall
Of earthly trappings here and there to see
Black blending with the sunshine of my thrall;
But all the fair is thine! the best and brightest all!

And, O! that I could love thee more and more,
And with a love whose fondness matcheth thine!
For, lo! thy day is speeding swiftly o'er,
And soon shall come the closing scene of mine.
Nay! ere is dry this dedicatory line,
And ere my vale has passed to other hands,
Thy spirit may have pinioned the divine,
And mine have bordered unfamiliar lands,
But life or death, thy name my heart's best love commands!

The Derwent Valley.

CANTO FIRST.

Fair Derwent Vale! extending on the sight,
Thy wild, green woods, thy fields of teeming grain,
Where laughing maidens mingle high delight
With lowly toil—the weeding of the plain!
O! could I sheen thy glory in my strain,
Or tell the charms thy deepening shades afford,
This unknown lyre had not been woke in vain,
But ears entranced had dwelt on every chord,
To catch the faintest sound of every glowing word!

But let that pass. The highest boon of Heaven,
The love-swathed soul, the bosom-burning song,
May not be lost, nor meanly, vainly given
To whom enraptured roams thy glens among.
And while these mingling morning glories throng
The blue transcendence of thy lovely skies,
My heart demands, thrall'd with emotions strong,
Which bloom and verdure bid alternate rise,
The tuning of my lute to Nature's Harmonies.

Flow on, bright stream! And while I smooth a seat
On thy green verge to watch thy winsome play,
And catch the cadence of thy liquid beat,
Blend thy soft music with my ruder lay!
For I could sit and breathe my soul away
In one full song of warm and deathless love
Of these wild hills and wood-capp'd I survey,
Gazing in grandeur o'er the leafy grove,
Or mounting in their might man's meaner works above.

O, wild green hills! Your mute society
Has weaned high spirits from the vulgar brood,
And fired them with sublimer piety
Than that which sways the common brotherhood.
To live among you is not to exclude
Ourselves from holy converse: the fresh heart
Is taught a wisdom in your solitude
Far deeper than that Pedagogues impart
Who gulp their worldly lore and deal it out by art

To live among you is to scorn the strife,
The petty pride, the heart-corroding care,
That blight the blossom of our mortal life,
And make existence more than we can bear.
To live among you is to feel the air
All fresh and balmy on the open brow:
To live among you in a vale so fair
As this that I am gazing over now,
Is to imbibe a bliss that tongue can ne'er avow!

O, wild green hills! rehearse to me the history
Of all that you beheld in days of yore;
Of all the deeds of love and mystery
That you have gazed in placid silence o'er;
Of all the woes our nomad fathers bore,
Ere they had homes to shelter from the gale;
What was the import of their mystic lore?
How did they frame the woman-wooing tale?
Alas! ye silent hills! Alas! thou silent vale!

How hard to dream as we behold thee now,
Nursed in this unstirred calm from east to west,
That ever war disturbed thy peaceful brow,
Or marshalled clashing armies o'er thy breast!
That ever thou wert mentally distress'd,
Galled, bosom-tortured by a craven fear
Of phantom gods that would not let thee rest!
And yet, as we trace backward year by year,
What bloody hours and bale black-crowd around us here!

Behold! the nomad Britons rise around!
The Muse commands their Druids, too, arise,
Prepare their altar on this bushy mound,
And whet their knife and strike the sacrifice.
And hark! O God! those agonizing cries!
The crackling of these sacrificial fires!
Alas! upon this blazing altar lies
The ill-starr'd son atoning for his sires,*
And there he bleeds and burns, and inch by inch expires!

* The Druids, the first religious sect that we read of in this country, sacrificed human beings to their gods. "From Cæsar we learn that in cases of individuals being exposed to imminent danger, whether from war or disease, it was customary to immolate human victims." "It would be difficult to prove that these sacrifices were at all times human victims, and yet as difficult to prove that they were not."—*History of Northumbria*.

And shall the dear oblation bleed in vain?
Hark! the Diviner, who with dripping hands,
Wrings out the answer from the heart of Pain*—
Pain that consumes the soul o'er which he stands!—
Who, while the vacant, glazing eye expands,
The wild pulse quivers in its latest play,
Proclaims aloud to congregated bands,
How this heart-harrowing maniac-display
Has pleased offended gods and banished man's dismay!

Ah, me! How man has tortured heart and brain
To quench the smouldering hell that burns within!
What heifers, bullocks, mortals have been slain
To purge his soul from that foul taint of sin
Which turns his life to gall! Who jeer and grin
And deem the doctrine of a dying god
Invention's hoax, old Fable's cheat and din,
Is it not strange, if Sin demands not blood,
That men should *dream it did* and spill the vital flood?

* The *modus operandi* of Druidical Sacrifice is too well known to need much comment. But by those who may have forgotten, and those who are not yet acquainted with this particular phase of the unhappy business, the following note may not be ruled out of place: "The Diviner inferred the pleasure or displeasure of the gods they were propitiating, from the contortions and death-throes, &c., &c., of their victim."—*History of Northumbria*.

But Derwent, turning once again to thee,
Whose sun-rayed ripples these broom blossoms lave,
Where, where is now thy guardian deity,
The god whose shrine was thine own glassy wave?
Have not the young, the old, the meek, the brave,
All in devotion knelt on this green sod?
Deemed they the offerings fruitless which they gave?
Or such as might appease thy latent god,
Secure his guardian care, avert his chastening rod?

Whence hath he fled, my river and my theme?
Thy bosom is as sheeny as of yore,
And thy fresh banks with richer harvests teem
Than when he deigned thy waters to explore.
Whence hath he fled? Entranced I've scanned thy shore
Ere Sol's first beams have warmed the laverock's nest,
And after he has burned the welkin o'er,
And burnished blazing grandeur on the west,
But ne'er beheld that god thy votaries once address'd.*

* "These Druid teachers and their flocks had lords many and gods many, for besides many deities somewhat similar to those of Pagan Greece and Rome, each mountain, forest, spring, and lake had its tutelary divinity; and it is supposed, though perhaps it may be but supposed, that all these were worshipped with sacrifice and prayer."—*History of Northumbria.*

Whence hath he fled? Imbued with silent grief,
And when the heart has danced to songs of joy;
When Spring's young kiss spread beauty o'er the leaf,
And Summer woke the world to rapture high;
When wealthy Autumn cheered the farmer's eye,
And Winter mantled o'er the daisy's bed:
In every mood, beneath all hues of sky,
Thy lovely banks have echoed to my tread,
But shade! or sprite! or god! Dear stream, whence hath he fled?

Whence hath he fled? Dark in the minds of men
Rose this black phantom of that mental night,
Whose shadow shall not pall thy scenes again,
Since they have basked beneath a day more bright,
And felt the thrill of holier delight!
"Even gods must yield, religions take their turn;"*
But just such gods as flee before the light
Of Truth supernal! "Shrines no longer burn,"*
Which are not His who blasts all falsehoods with his scorn!

Man shall not grope in gloom for evermore:
The Wisdom-hand that framed the thinking mind,
Still leads him up, through all the vague before,
From peak to peak with broader truths-beams lined,
Till mounting which commands the whole behind—
The fable-faiths, the long-discarded lies,—
As we gaze back and deem our fathers blind,
So may our children's more enlightened eyes,
Deem our most priestly creeds huge faith-deformities.

Where is the priest of Albion's infant days?
His sacred beard and beads no longer flow!
Her antique Bard of sacerdotal lays?
His broken harp is silent now and low!
The hand that with fresh hearts made altars glow?
The Fear that worshipped Frenzy? In the dust!
Those lies have gone, and other lies shall go,
That spread their glozen hues o'er human trust:
Ah, yes! Man's creed of love has yet to conquer lust.

But creeds! the puzzled world is vexed with creeds!
The meanest quack may coin his dogma new,
And flaunt the fancy till the few he leads,
Toss their wise heads and crow the little "view"
That they—*they* are the god's anointed few,
That Heaven was built for them, and only them;
And Hell—Hell—But, chaotic creeds, adieu!
There *may* be virtue in your garment's hem,
Yet, give to me the stars in Beauty's diadem.

And thou whose heart grows sated of the town,
And sighs for scenes beyond the busy street,
The cross of life for one brief day lay down,
And follow whither I shall lead thy feet!
While this loud quack, that smooth commercial cheat,
Yon sense-thrall'd dotard and his tipsy queen,
The low and loathsome lies of life repeat,
And, wanton, welter in their ways unclean,
Our eyes shall drink the bliss of Derwent's fairy scene.

Come with me. Morning's balm is in the air,
And Beauty spans the azure cope of sky;
Shall youthful hearts assign themselves to care,
When hours, days, years, like lightning flashes fly,
And heedless all of mortal grief or joy?
What lavish rapture laughing Nature yields!
And we shall revel in the rich supply,
And haunt the woods, the valleys, floods, and fields,
Till we have sheathed our swords and laid aside our shields!

Come with me, and the lamb's engaging play
Shall teach us wisdom as we rove the mead;
The throstle's loud, the laverock's soothing lay—
Framed not to fit the dogma of a creed,
But rising purely from a sense of need,
And sense of gratitude for need supplied—
Shall purge our bosoms of the thoughts that breed
The moping doubt, the philosophic pride,
And turn our hearts to God whose hands for all provide!

Come with me, and if I may be thy guide
Our hearts shall hold communion with the flowers;
And with such bright companions by thy side,
What sense of earth shall cloy the happy hours?
And Derwent stealing by her hazel bowers,
Shall make us music as her banks we rove,
And dance as though she felt in strains of ours,
The warm and melting harmony of love:
Come, all is sheen below, and all is calm above!

On, on we go by ruins old and hoary
That frowning, fling their shadows o'er our way,
And breathe in silent eloquence the story
Of what they were in ages past away,
And, as they moulder in sublime decay,
The moral of our visionary state:
That man, howe'er he vaunt sublimer clay,
Howe'er he hide behind the title—great,
Shall crumble 'neath the heel of steady-marching Fate.

Away! away! The valley stretches far,
But hearts all hope, stout limbs and nimble feet
Shall speed us o'er the distance like a car
Whirled by a charger fiery and fleet!
And O! the wild bee-haunted fells, replete
With heather-bloom and Beauty's varied ray,
Hold rapture for the gaze! Sublime and sweet
Shall be the record of this pleasing day,
Beneath whose sunny smile we urge our lovely way.

But stop! The scene commands—O, peerless charm
Behold the hill-environ'd Blanchland smile!
The stretch of laden acres and the farm,
That tell the joys of self-rewarding toil!
Here, mother earth, thy grandeur may beguile
The swain enamoured of the loved embrace!
And sorrow's son reclining here awhile,
And seeing only gladness on thy face,
May feel his pain assuaged and bless the holy place!

O, bowery Blanchland!* Pilgrim gaze around
On all these glowing glories! Gaze again,
And thou shalt deem this no unhallow'd ground!
Behold the field aglow with ripening grain,
The flowery fell, the woodland and the plain,
The shaggy crag, the hill's commanding height!
Gaze and the scene shall warm thy throbbing brain,
And thrill thy bosom with a wild delight,—
Wild, and like poet's dream unutterably bright!

And when thy heart—these wild arcades explored—
Glow with supernal and substantial joy;
And when thy mind with fervid feeling stirr'd,
Is framed for musings hallow'd and high,
Gaze on this crude, monastic masonry,†
Fast crumbling now beneath the touch of Time,
Which to the surface-glance of idle eye,
Is scarcely worth the tribute of a rhyme,
But which, to deeper ken, is rich with lore sublime.

* Blanchland, one of the most picturesque places in the valley, is situated on the left bank of the Derwent, about two miles from its source, nine miles from Stanhope, and about ten from Shotley Bridge. Hidden deep down in the valley, you have no indication of its whereabouts until you are immediately above it, and, approached as it is, by a road over bleak moorlands, you light upon the unexpected oasis as a sweet surprise. The river is crossed by a bridge. "Near it are the village, built round a little square, which is entered by an old battlemented gateway, and the ancient church, with its heavy massive tower."—*Murray's Northumberland and Durham*.

† "A Convent of Premonstratensian Monks founded by WALTER DE

These old, rude walls are relics of a fane,
That held high hearts in silent sanctitude;
And here they poured the prayer and matin strain,
And won the meed that waits upon the good.
For it was theirs to blend in brotherhood
And make the sum of human evils less;
To stem the ignominious passion-flood,
And bathe the wounds of sorrow and distress,
And light the path of life with hope and happiness.

O! labour blest, when thus engaging man!
Why do we spurn thy rich and rare reward,
To fret and groan and writhe beneath the ban,
That makes our ways so thorny and so hard;
When selfish pride is all we need discard
To purify affection's holy spring,
And make existence sweet as song of bird,
As bright as butterfly upon the wing,
And pure as infant's dream and chaste imagining!

BOLBECK, in 1175, and afterwards enriched by the gifts of the NEVILLES. It was connected with the Abbey of Beverley, but little is known of its history. The existing Church of St. Mary the Virgin is only a remnant of a much larger building, of which traces may still be seen on the E. It is of a strange form, the principal portion running N. and S.; an immense transept, to which the choir is attached at one end and the tower at the other. A baptistery was added on the S.E., in 1844. The interior is lofty and striking, but when bought by Lord CREWE, in 1721, was roofless, and almost a ruin."—*Murray*.

Enough! The muse evades the saddening theme.
Their lives in Alba Landa's* holy dome,
Flow'd sweetly, as in summer days, the stream
Meanders by the ruins of their home,
Till those inured in plundering raids to roam—
I tell the story that tradition tells—
Blent, on these heights, malignant joy and foam,
And savage laughter with the chime of bells,
That led them to their spoils athwart the realm of fells.

From wanderings wild and filled with foul and feud,
And dripping shrines aglow with human gore,
To startle this supernal solitude
With damning deed they came! And o'er and o'er
The hills that, purple-blossom'd, base the shore,
They roamed and nursed their ignominious will,
Till cursing loud the luck that held the oar,
And lone and lost among the moorlands still,
The Convent bells rang out on wild Dead Friar's Hill!

* Name of the Abbey.

They came! the nameless, bloody men, they came!
Whose long-nursed vengeance stilled the voice of prayer;
Whose eyes red-gleaming with a frenzied flame,
Glared, gloating round on treasures rich and rare;
Whose hands assigned to silence and despair,
The plundered temple and the sainted dead!
They came, and lo! the monks are lying *there*,
As heedless now of man's inhuman tread,
As of these flowers that fling their fragrance o'er their bed!*

Time, rolling on the eternal tide of years,
Huge-laden with the legacy of pain,
That floods the earth with lava-streams of tears
And blots her beauty with their burning rain,—
Time, holds in his dull, fathomless domain,
All that they were, and all to them akin:
The fragments of their Abbey that remain,
Are yon dark arch, and hospitable inn,
Where farmers o'er brown jugs create such merry din!†

* "Tradition informs us that a raid of Scots who came to plunder the Convent were unable to find it on account of its secluded situation, but that when they arrived at the spot which is still called "Dead Friar's Hill," they heard the Blanchland bells, which the monks were already ringing for joy at their deliverance, and, following the sound, were guided to the Convent, and slaughtered the monks."—*Murray*.

† Whether there is any truth in this tradition or not, we have, at any rate, historical evidence that it was burned down; and that it was in ruins in less than two hundred years after it was founded by

But deem not thou because the broken dome,
Vibrates no more with music's merry chimes,
That worship perished with her ruined home.
Howe'er she wept the sacrilegious crimes,
Her cause triumphant sped; and other times
Brought WESLEY here to tell her burning story—
As musical as are his brother's rhymes,
Fired at Golgotha, the sublime and gory!—
And, like a second PAUL, the cross was all his glory!

His glory, and exceeding noble meed:
For if to stir the passive multitude,
Awake in men the love of noble deed,
And all the lovely attributes of good:
To give them thoughts that soothe their solitude,
And bend them heaven-ward as we bend a reed,
And make our name to men of every mood
A mem'ry blest, if this be noble meed,
Then WESLEY's fame be mine, for his is fame indeed!

WALTER DE BOLBECK. The gateway, and the refectory, now converted into an inn—are all that remain of the original structure. For the sake of some of my readers, I might say here that Dr. ELLIS speaks of this inn as being very comfortable, and recommends Blanchland very highly as a health resort,

Thus round this pile what mingling memories crowd!
What good men raised, the bad laid crumbling low;
What heard the faith devoted monks avowed,
Heard the sublimer innovation flow
From Pope and prelate's most inveterate foe;*
And long decades ere monk or monkish creed,
Had even dreamt of his protestant blow,
Around these walls, or in the adjacent mead,
The proud young EDWARD watched his wild war chargers feed!†

Ay! ere the brave Black DOUGLAS,‡ fighting, fell,
Or cast among the unbelieving hordes,
The heart he prized so wisely and so well,
These miles were made to bristle with the swords,
Of England's proud, and Scotland's sturdy lords:
For lo! the *red-shanks*,§ stern, revengeful, came,
And, breathing high disdain and braggart words,
Wrapt fair Northumbria's scattered farms in flame,
And bade the brave young King defend his menaced claim.

* WESLEY is said to have preached standing on a stone beside the ruined abbey.

† It was on his way to meet DOUGLAS and MORAY who, carrying out the commandment of ROBERT BRUCE, were wasting Northumberland, that the young King, EDWARD III., turned his horses to feed in the fields near the monastery, which, the historian informs us, "was burned," and "which was called, in King ARTHUR's time, Blanchland."

‡ "I cannot tell," said an English soldier, "what is to happen here, but, somehow, I have great fear of the Black DOUGLAS playing us some

But though the tale of EDWARD's first campaign
 May well employ the mind that muses here,
 The Bay Bridge woods engage the gaze again,
 And lavish round us more enchanting cheer.
 Or if old story big with fate and fear,
 Divert thy vision from the sheen of earth,
 Behold the vault that, ghastly gaping near,
 Tells dubious deeds of eld to Hunstanworth, ¶
 And yawns where mouldering hearts are hushed to joy and mirth !

But see! the sun is mounting high,
 And we must haste away,
 Else other charms that wait the eye,
 Shall not be seen to-day.
 'Tis ours to rove where beauty dwells,
 And as we hie along,
 Our voice shall ring among the fells,
 And this shall be the song:

trick." A moment later, and the doughty Scotchman was in the heart of EDWARD's camp calling out: "a DOUGLAS! a DOUGLAS! English thieves, ye are all dead men!" His journey to Jerusalem with the heart of BRUCE; the memorable incident of his throwing that heart into the ranks of the infidels to inspire his followers; the fate that befell him, etc., are facts well known to even moderate readers.

§ The Scots, not content with *eating* Northumbria's cattle in this case, made "shoon" of the hides, "fitting them to their feet and ankles while raw, with the hair outwards; so that, from this cause, the English called them the rough-footed Scots and *red-shanks*."

¶ "Hunstanworth is about one mile S.W. of Blanchland. In the

O, Derwent chaste, enchanting view!

What sight is half so fair,

When flowers array'd in summer hue

Deluge thy balmy air?

In field and grove, in grot and cove,

A thousands spells abide,

That bind the soul with soft control

To lovely Derwentside.

From daisied mead the laverock springs

Swift-pinioned to the sky,

As flooding on the ear it flings

The fulness of its joy.

From bush and rill and tufted hill,

There flows a genial tide

Of life and light and rapture bright,

That thrills the Derwentside.

Churchyard here, is a very extraordinary arched vault, forty-five feet long and twenty-five feet wide, turfed over, which has probably been used for securing goods and cattle during the Scottish raids.

Athwart her banks the children run
Loud-laughing in their glee,
As though their sunny lives were one
Unbroken jubilee!
And maid and swain parade the plain,
Or in the gloaming, glide
To some fair scene that lies between
The world and Derwentside!

O, Spring eternal, bless her shades
With never-fading bloom!
Forever be her wild arcades
Prolific of perfume!
Bright be her groves with human loves
By no privation tried!
And all of worth that glads the earth,
Adorn the Derwentside.

How mean the sordid soul, who, groping low,
Feels in his heart no warm emotions rise,
When gazing on the earth's supernal glow,
Or on the deep, blue depths of smiling skies!
What sight may charm his self-inverted eyes,
Or what awake the fine ethereal thrill,—
The high delights, the sweetly pensive joys,
That with such fulness finer bosoms fill,
By gurgling woodland burn, or babbling mountain rill?

High-towering hills, chaste meads, gay-blooming fells
And grazing herds around the quiet farm!
Green-mantled woods, grim crags, and ferny dells,
To feeling hearts how potent is your charm!
When lost with you no ills of life alarm,
No clashing factions ruffle or oppose;
Beneath your sway even love breathes doubly warm,
And genius with a finer fervour glows,
Or feels that blissful calm the heart's serene repose.

Behold the circumambient miles of bloom!
The fells! the wild and purple-mantled fells!
The blushing world of heather and perfume,
Where man, in blest conditions, normal dwells;
And pure and simple as the tale he tells,
Oblivious to the chaos and the crush
Of life within the sound of city bells,
May dream and drink the balm of bloom and bush,
At day's delicious dawn or sunset's golden flush,

O Eden! Eden!* Friend, can you believe
That this lone home is Eden, which you see
That here a late-born ADAM and an EVE,
Bask in the light of all the joys that be
Wrapt up in rural life's simplicity?
Sheened in thy memory bear the scene away;
'Twill bear thee most supernal company,
And gem the seething eddies grave and gay
That circle city life with *one* transcendent ray.

* There is a small, solitary cottage standing on the Fells, between Blanchland and Edmondbyers, named after the sublime inheritance humanity has deplored so much. I have been informed, too, that the ADAM and EVE mentioned above, are real personages, and the keepers of this Eden. Our readers may visit the place and ascertain for themselves. But let the visit be in the summer or early autumn, and they will be amply repaid, for the surrounding Fells are positively charming about this time.

O, how transcendent may his rapture be,
When all the voices of the fells are mute,
Who drinks the music of her ministry,
Here, with no other spirit to impute,
A single chord, unpleasing, to her lute!
But flaming sword! and subtle serpent foe!
And sinful palate! and forbidden fruit!
That blasted pristine Eden's virgin blow,
O'er *this* as over *that* their shades are sure to throw!

But on! The heart refuses to forget
The time-asserting dial of the sky:
Scenes unsurveyed and joys ungathered yet,
Await the salutation of the eye.
But ere we pass this straggling hamlet by,
That greets the pilgrim with such dreamy mien,
The dawn of one delightful memory,*
Bright as a sun-ray'd lake verged round with green,
Invites a pause and glads the bosom with its sheen.

* The author preached here some time ago.

Behold the hale and hearty Edmondbyers,*
The homes of sunny hearts and open hands;
Homes undisturbed by passion's wilder fires,
And rich with all that simple life commands.
The soul that breathes among these rustic bands
Is touched by no contaminating lives:
Transparent as the dew-drops on their lands,
And natural as the bees that crowd their hives,
Are these unpolished sires, sons, maidens, mothers, wives!

These are the lives that mother nature makes
To shame the bungling workmanship of man;
And wisdom hails the happy heart that takes
For earnest use her model and her plan!
For what is all th' unsocial break and ban
Of lives conventional, compared with these?
The gay "Sir Sophs" may laud the town that can,
And pander to the palate as they please,
But men are happier here with buttermilk and cheese!

* Edmondbyers, a quaint, old-fashioned, country place, containing not more, I should think, than about fifty houses, stands about three miles-and-half from Blanchland, and about six-and-a-half from Shotley Bridge. British, Anglo-Saxon, and other remains have been found here, proving it to be a Settlement of very ancient date. But what will interest the visitor most, if his antiquarian proclivities be not very much in the ascendancy, will be the character of the people he comes in contact with, and, if he visit it in the summer or early autumn, the beauty of surrounding scenery.

Lo! that firm step, bronze cheek, and open brow;
The unmarred beauty of that sturdy limb;
Who owns them bears the soil stains of the plough;
And yet, what city gent precise and prim,
Feels half the fresh warm life that glows in him?
Behold his lass undecked with bagatelles:
Not all the painted Madams' art can trim,
Bears half the bloom, feels half th' emotion-swells:
Here men are men, not Beaux, and maids are maids, not Belles!

O, woman! man's life-sweetener, sole 'earth-star!
The queen that rules the empire of his heart,
How fraught with power thy peerless beauties are
How deep th' abiding joy-thrill they impart!
Then why add hue to hue and art to art,
To gain and sway whom thou hast always swayed?
More, more of thy soul-soothing self assert,
But in thine own sweet native bloom arrayed,
For art can give no charms like those that nature made.

And man, creative man, whose shaping hand,
Has for thy world such high achievements wrought,
What rare adornments scattered o'er the land,
Are teeming with thy poetry of thought!
But why the mundane to proportion brought,
Should thus employ thy best imaginings,
While Chaos-life with such confusion fraught,
Mars the sublimer harmony of things,
Has foiled my logic oft and clipp'd my muse's wings!

But, once again, behold the smiling miles,
That spread their wealth of beauty on the view;
And we must wade their sunny maze of smiles,
If we would haunt the park of Prior Hugh;*
Or learn the tale of WARD's romantic shoe;†
Or trace the art of LOUGH's apprentice hand;‡
Or roll the vision o'er enchantment new,
Ere sullen Eve has raised her magic wand,
And dashed the vision out that shimmers o'er the land.

* Prior Hugh enclosed a park at Muggleswick, in the thirteenth century.

† EDWARD WARD, a gigantic hunter, who is buried here. Tradition says that his favourite hound littered in his wooden shoe.

‡ LOUGH'S first attempt at Sculpture was an angel's head, with drapery, on a plain stone, in memory of JANE, daughter of JOHN and ANN MAYOR. This is still to be seen at Muggleswick,

Hail! hail, the wilds Mosstroopers roamed of yore!—
We rove enraptured our engaging way,
To delve the mines of legendary lore,
Or sniff the scent of primrose patches gay;
For in these woods, and in that wilder day,
When lawless minds essayed no beaten track,
But loved adventure as they loved the prey
They hugged, transported, on their journey back,
Have planned their purpose fell full many a savage pack!

Ay! here they ran, the tameless and the wild,
The doughty and indomitable raid,
Who looked on frowning danger till she smiled,
Or in their hearts a frenzied gladness made;
Or till their blind contempt of fear betrayed
And hurled them headlong into waiting gins:
Else Muggleswick, the hapless priest that said
The Litany o'er thy sorrows and thy sins,*

Had not been huddled through this maze of leaves and whins!

* In January, 1528, a band of border thieves "headed by a WILLIAM. a CHARLTON or WILLIE. a SHOTLYNGTON," entered the bishopric of Durham, robbed a number of persons in the neighbourhood of Wolsingham, and daringly carried off the priest of Muggleswick with them as a prisoner. They fell into the hands of the law at Haydon Bridge. CHARLTON and HENRY NOBLE, his chief coadjutor, were killed; two others called ARMSTRONG and DODDE, were taken prisoners. ARMSTRONG was hung in chains, near Newcastle; DODDE at Alnwick. The bodies of CHARLTON and NOBLE were also hung in chains; the former at Hexham, the latter at Haydon Bridge. Of what became of the poor priest the historian gives us no intelligence.

But O! the shimmering sheen of hazel dells!
'Tis not for us to waste the beaming hours,
With mouldering page of hazy chronicles,
When such a volume of resplendent bowers,
Invites the eye, heart, soul, and all the powers
Of soul, the ear, and every 'wakened sense,
To read, and learn the rapture that endures,
And with such deluge of sweet eloquence,
As melts the wondering man with gratitude intense!

How rich and rank the green woods stretch away!
How fair the lovely prospect and how fine
That sheened its charms in CARR's* enduring lay!
And—O ye Numbers and Seraphic Nine!
Give me a Muse to mirror them in mine!
For these are scenes from which a bard may reap,
Thoughts that are raptures, dreams that are divine!
And O, heart-heaven! could Memory only keep
Forever glassed within the elysium of the Sneep!†

* JOHN CARR, LL.D., of Muggleswick, author of an ode to the Derwent.

† The Derwent, in the neighbourhood of Muggleswick, makes a sharp bend round a point of land called "the Sneep," which is, perhaps, the finest piece of scenery in the valley. "The word is supposed to be from the old Norse "snappa" or "snoppa," a beak. A similar point in Redesdale, at the junction of Tarsset-burn with Hunter's-burn, is called the Snipe, which name is also given to the north eastern point of Holy Island,"—*Palmer's Tyne and its Tributaries*,

Hark! how the lark flings gratitude around,
As like a speck he flutters in the blue!
And all the mingled melody of sound
From copse and cove resounds the valley through!
How rich the balms that valley-breeze imbue!
How all-enthraling nature's modest mien!
Had man, her child, and heir of moments few,
Been half in concert with her dazzling sheen,
His wailing note of woe had ne'er been heard, I ween!

Ye joyous birds! ye incense-breathing flowers
Whose spreading blooms indulge the thrifty bee!
That fill with joy, or charm the children's hours,
With wholesome play, or healthy vacancy!
O! could our lives with yours in concert flee,
And ours and your chaste pleasures be the same,
How fair the sky of our felicity!
For, O, the heart that mortal has to tame,
Needs sorrow's sifting fan, and dross-refining flame!

Gaze on the earth, companion of my way:
Gaze on the azure canopy above:
The meanest thing and highest you survey,
Cries God's creation revels in His love.
Is there a blot that wisdom would remove
In all this wide expanse of universe?
Hark! hear the answer winging from the grove,
Where hymning birds their little loves rehearse,
And that loud answer is—Sin's all consuming curse!

A curse that sears the heart and brands the brow,
With that the very sunbeams blush to kiss;
That bids us sigh for worlds we cannot view,
When we should find our Paradise in this!
For say, would mortal dream of future bliss?
Build his elysium in the field of air?
Or fable the unfathomable abyss,
If men were worthy of a world so fair?
Oh, God! erase the blot Thy groaning creatures bear!

Luxuriant wood, green shade and spangled plain,
That laughed beneath the fire of LOUGH's* young eye,
And glassed such beauty in his busy brain,
As, when with something of a farmer's joy,
He watched his scattered seed upspringing high!
Associated with so bright a birth,
And linked with such a star-like destiny,
Well may you bid the bounding heart go forth,
And hail the God that spread such glory o'er the earth!

Was it not great in one of birth so mean,
To take up life in these unlettered ways,
And make it shimmer with transcendent sheen,
Born out of darkness into noonday blaze?
'Twas! Such high lives are healing as the rays
Of vernal suns to invalid mankind:
For shivering the clay sceptre Mammon sways,
They cast its muddy fragments to the wind,
And speed triumphant on the marches of the mind.

* JOHN GRAHAM LOUGH, the Sculptor, who was born at Greenhead, about three miles from Shotley Bridge, served his apprenticeship as a Stonemason, did some farm work, and grew up to manhood in this vicinity. "He sprang, like many others in whom the fire of creative thought has burned so brightly, from very humble parents. At a comparatively early age, he was busily engaged in helping to contribute to the family coffers. Like BURNS, he followed the plough, and long before the distinctive bent of his talents had manifested itself, had done many a hard day's field work, winning therefrom, in after years, that keen sympathy with nature which gave to his lighter imaginative

For mark the path by which his lofty mind
Aspiring, sought the sunlit peaks of fame:
What stubborn bars by adverse powers assigned
Rose frowning 'tween the genius and his aim!
Friend, if you envy an immortal name,
Or want a source from which the soul may quaff
An inspiration suffering cannot tame,
Peruse the page that limns the life of LOUGH,
And learn what galling gyves his climbing soul shook off!

For only who delve deeply understand
By what stern force we make high objects ours;
How we must scatter with unflagging hand,
If we would pluck life's luscious fruits and flowers.
And, O, to tread the winepress of the hours,
To squeeze sour sorrow till it yield sweet joy,
Is not for weak possessors of great powers,
Or wills that any wind may turn awry,
Else one LOUGH's life had been less tinctured with alloy.

creations, a delicacy to be caught only from the spirit of the wood and the fell. He died April 8, 1876."

A catalogue of the LOUGH Models may be had in Elswick Hall, Elswick Park, Newcastle, where the principal of his works are deposited.

For he, too, was a proteus of high gifts :*
 The sculptor, poet, painter, blent in him :
 But his was that wild music-soul that lifts
 Weak minds to dizzy heights, where shadows grim
 Are creatures palpable that gibe and limn
 Fantastic tangle-doms, and people those
 With terror-glories indistinct and dim.
 But peace ! ay, peace, the grave has soothed his woes,
 And impious hearts no more shall ruffle his repose.

The scenes which, all enchanting, threw their spell
 O'er old King ARTHUR, who in dreamy state,
 Abides for ever cavernd in this dell ;
 Or till the subtle hand that fixed his fate
 Dispels the dear delusion ! † Where, elate,
 The doughty ROWLEY'S blustering dame espied, ‡
 Her lord come home with HODGE'S live estate,
 And proudly, loudly "Well done, ROWLEY !" cried ;
 "When dost thou gang again?" Most avaricious bride!

* TOM LOUGH, brother to the great sculptor, a truly wonderful individual, who had all his brother's abilities except one—the faculty to guide them. He was poet, painter, and musician combined, and might have succeeded as any one of these ; but—and that *but* in poor Tom's case meant something—he might have said with Prince HENRY of the "Golden Legend :"—

"O holy Father ! pardon in me
 The oscillation of a mind
 Unsteadfast, and that cannot find
 Its centre of rest and harmony."

The scenes prolific of such lavish joy,
 Where facts of such dissimilar fates are stored,
 We, often lingering, breathe a warm good-bye,
 To haunt the heights that laugh on Allansford.
 Hark! now the mill's dissonant sound is heard;
 And gleams the white spray on the busy wheel:
 Around, a thousand lovely things accord;
 The cot, the shingled shore, the river's reel,
 To natures such as ours heart-sheening truths reveal.

How rich the wood, how green the grassy mound,
 Where sleeps the once indomitable RAW,§
 And where, asylumed safe, he gazed around,
 And, toiling through the scenes surrounding, saw
 The coming plunder, or the searching law!
 What though unconsecrated memory
 May hold a thousand feebler souls in awe?
 He slumbers there beneath his chosen tree,
 And who, wherever laid, may sleep more sound than he?

† There is a deep cavern near the Sneep, in which King ARTHUR, with several of his horsemen and their horses are said to be in a trance, all equipped and ready to march to regain his kingdom, when the time appointed—which is now very near—shall arrive, and the enchantment be broken.—*Ryan*.

‡ ROWLEY HARRISON, a mosstrooper, driving home eight cows and a bull, was met by his wife, who said: "Well done, ROWLEY! When dost thou gang again!" He was buried outside Muggleswick churchyard, September, 1712.—*Ryan*.

§ On the crest of the hill, immediately opposite Allansford, is the

Nay, take away the festering memory stain
And pillow'd here who could not wish to lie?
Where lark and blackbird pipe their grateful strain,
And Derwent hymns her soothing lullaby?
Here no fond heart may break in agony
Nor pour itself in teardrops on the sward:
For soon the hope-inspiring beauties by
Would cheer or chase the sombre thought and hard
That hue their hearts with gloom who tread the dull churchyard

But we must pause. The day begins to wane,
And lengthening shadows blacken on the blue:
Another day may find us here again,
Our Derwent Valley ramble to renew,
But for the present one most kind adieu!
Ah! thus we bear the oft-recurring smart!
Old faces go—old scenes fade on the view:
But shall the loves and memories depart?
These, these abiding things we carry in the heart!

burial place of another mosstrooper, named THOMAS RAW, who was denied Christian sepulture, and who, knowing his doom, chose this beautiful promontory as the place of his permanent rest, where, under a tree, is a neat stone bearing the following inscription: "Here lieth the body of THOMAS RAW, of Wharnley Burn, who departed this life January 30, Anno Domini, 1714." Allansford is within easy distance of Shotley Bridge, and the pleasures afforded by the walk will be sufficient reward for anyone who may chose to take it.

THE DERWENT VALLEY.

CANTO SECOND.

DEDICATED TO MR. JOSHUA LAX,
SHOTLEY BRIDGE.

Dedication.

My friend, my time-tried, my time-proven friend!
'Tis not the Muse, but her transcendent theme,
That bids me hope that you will condescend
To be the patron of my Derwent-dream.
For you have caught the glow and glory-gleam
Of other valleys, other glens and bowers,
In other lands than this, but never stream
Gave such celestial pinions to your hours,
Or thrall'd you with such charm as this dear stream of ours.

Nay! you had limn'd in laudatory lays,
As soothing in the fervour of their flow,
As Derwent's babble to her bushy braes,
The greenwood grandeur and the bloom and blow,
That my warm verse, though feebler, strives to show,
Ere I had roam'd her banks, or dared her fords;
And all the love that brightens with its glow,
This later page of rudely-woven words,
Has, trembling in your heart, some corresponding chords.

Though 'tis not mine to gloss in lofty line
The quiet beauty of the mead and grove,
Nor limn the life so hallow'd and benign
That marks the veering valley of our love;
Nor mine the page-enchanted heart to move,
With high creation born of gathered lore,
'Twas not in me to wholly speechless rove,
These breezy heights, this meadow-margin'd shore,
And seal my lips to all the heart would fain outpour.

And if I dare, thus boldly, to diffuse
My soul in lengthy lay, 'tis meet that you,
The first kind patron of my infant muse,
Find on this page the grateful tribute due.
For when the heart, awakening, thrilled me through,
And thought on thought were fashioned into rhyme,
How fit your helpful guidance! and how true
The manly admonition! Dear old time
Can point me back to nought more sacred or sublime!

And I have toiled and rhymed away the years—
Years that have fled so vision-like and fast—
Have scattered much that's ripened into tears,
Much that may bring reflection at the last.
But yet, as I gaze o'er the hazy past,
And see how much of good and ill depends
On man's own deed, my gratitude is vast;
For though small favours partial Mammon sends,
Have I not health and you, the best and first of friends?

And heedless all what others may pursue,
My spirit spurns the mercenary aim :
The dear esteem of the enlightened few,
The rest in death with honour on the name,
Are all I wish. And if the heart aflame
With thought and feeling to my page impart
Or grace, or pith, or power to merit fame,
Then shall these lines, my brother in the art,
Proclaim how much you've won the homage of my heart.

The Derwent Valley.

CANTO SECOND.

The dewy morn, in fleecy robe arrayed,
Steals, blushing coyly, o'er the daisied lawn,
And tips with beauty lea and leafy glade,
And chaseth darkness from the home of man.
And, lo! the lanes where fear so lately ran
Fleet-footed from the goblins of the brain
Are glory spots where Flora waves her fan,
Time-beating to the blackbird's joyous strain:
My friend, my theme, awake! the morn is up again.

The fresh, warm earth is bright with lovely things:
The winds beneath their balmy burthens sigh;
The sunrays sparkle in pellucid springs;
The woods are deluged with a vocal joy,
And mother nature's heart is bounding high:
The golden portals of the new-born day
Are crowded with a thousand throats that cry
"Awake! the dawn has blushed the gloom away!"
Awake! my friend, awake! and thou, my lovely lay!

Another morn, another gladdening morn,
Is broadening, blushing into sunny noon,
And, like a young hope in the bosom born,
Is big with blessing that shall fade too soon.
And, O, if you would earn a dearer boon
Than sweetest dream that blesses man's repose,
Come forth and while another day of June,
Where woodbine hangs in tassels o'er the rose,
And blushing o'er the broom-clad banks the foxglove glows!

Up! up with me and from this leafy ridge,
Behold the leagues of undulating shore,
And high o'er-gazing placid Shotley Bridge,
The haunts of whom in old time rivalled Thor,—
The hammer-wielding god in regions hoar,
Whose awful arm achieved such marvels vast,
And cracked the ribs of polar gods galore!—
Prone down yon height was Con's huge hammer cast;*
Behold, cries eld, behold the prowess of the past!

* There were, in the heroic ages of the Derwent, three brothers, all giants, named COR, BEN, and CON, who are said to have founded Corbridge, Benfieldside, and Consett, and to have had a huge hammer, which each, at a whistle, could throw nine miles. On one occasion, CON, who had become blind, threw the hammer, and it fell short, and made Howden which—as its name intimates—is a hollow dene, near Consett. Many adventures of those giants might be enumerated, but the whole is plainly fabulous, and has mixture of the more interesting and elegant classic mythology.—*Ryan*.

Or musing here upon the green-hill side,
Environed by the grandeur and the grace,
That nature's boundless bounty's multiplied,
And cast around this rural dwelling place,
'Twill yield us entertainment to retrace,
The stormy paths the pilgrim few were led,
Who flew the thralldom of their land and race,*
And gave high memories to the scene we tread,
Which as the years roll on inspiring radiance shed.

'Twere sad to tell and needless to disclose,
When to the world's bleak bosom they were cast,
How many wanderings brought them many woes,
That shook their hearts as tempests shake a mast.
Suffice it—they asylumed here at last,
Assiduous whirl'd industry's busy wheel,
And reckless of the perils they had pass'd,
For valour's hands they framed the finished steel,
That ran through sturdy foes who menaced Britain's weal.

* The German refugees who settled here, (Shotley Bridge), about two hundred years ago, and whose names were OLEY, VOOZ, MOLE, and BERTRAM. I have talked to intelligent old people who have told me that there was also a family of WARDS in the number. Be that as it may, Shotley Bridge became a place of considerable importance under the hands of the sword-makers; and, although GRANVILLE, in his "English Spas," charges them with "drunkenness," "ignorance," "want of religion," &c., the possibilities are that, had the Germans not found their way here, his book might have still wanted the chapter on Shotley Spa.

Behold their scene of triumph and bright hope:
There stood their now annihilated mill:
There toiled the men whose genius had to cope,
With those stern things that try the human will—
That hurl the weak and worthless *down* the hill
They *must ascend*, or welter in despair;
But render worthy lives more worthy still:
For what is greatness but a strength to dare
And triumph o'er the fate that weakness cannot bear?

They toiled, they triumphed, and are in the dust,
That soothing couch for which the weary pine;
And though is reared no monumental bust
From which the inquiring vision may divine
Their names, or number, or ancestral line,
Their length of life, or wealth of honours earn'd.
Glossed where the hopes and virtues entwine
Themselves in lovely record, may be learn'd
The goal to which they clomb, the light that in them burn'd.

And so their names repose on memories blest,
And win the honour-tribute they command.
But what full word may hue his vices best
Who bore the frénzied heart and impious hand? *
He who from where these trees high-towering stand,
To leagues beyond the Derwent's lovely bourne,
Flew like a fury through the startled land,
And lived as though he wished that he could turn
The earth into a hell and wither joy with scorn!

'Twould chill the heart the muse essays to cheer,
And add encumbrance to a gory verse,
To count the crimes that crimson'd his career
And stamp'd him an impersonated curse,
That blasted all things with a breath perverse.
From mortals down to farmers' garner'd hay!
Who wrested frailty with ignoble force,
Pitched to the waves his unsuspecting prey,
And with a weird ha! ha! loud-mocking stalked away!

* Mad MADDISON. See page 53.

Or who may picture with what demon glee
He viewed his son's distraction on his steed,
When mad, unbridled, plunging o'er the lea,
The charger matched Mazeppa's lightning speed!
And when was stretched the rider on the mead,
No change came over his unaltered eye;
For his base heart, if heart he had, indeed,
Felt no fine thrill of sensibility:
The darker deed the deeper his abnormal joy!

'Twould seem that TYPHON, Egypt's darkest god,
Whose baleful eye appalled the pagan Nile,
Had, housed in this wild heart, the Derwent trod,
To torture whom he could not render vile!
But she whose frown ne'er softened to a smile,
The avengeress whom no scheming guilt can shun,
Great Nemesis was on his track the while,
Who, when his ignominious course was run,
Brought to unholy dust the bad Mad MADDISON!*

* This individual's real christian name was RALPH, which was very seldom given him, and is never heard in the popular traditions concerning him; he is always called by the most unchristian name, "Mad," because of its fitness to give some idea of his extremely insane and immoral conduct. He lived immediately opposite the village, on the left bank of the river, had considerable estates in the neighbourhood, and was for some time a warden of the district; but, in his excursions against the mosstroopers, he must have acquired their predatory dispositions, and learnt to practise their desperate villainies, and soon became the constant terror of male and female, old and young. The old

But, hark! There's music at the Hally Well!†
The band! the dance! the lasses! and the swings!
The river wandering round the fairy dell!
The hours that bring such rapture on their wings!
The all-absorbing greenwood wanderings!
The sweet contortion of the lovely faces
That grin above the water as it springs!
The timid drink! the comical grimaces!
And the loud laughter blent with other words than graces!

The Hally Well! the loves awakened there!
The healing virtue of the mystic drink!
The wealthy odour of the woodland air
That bathes the brow that wanders to its brink!
The scene aglow with yellow, purple, pink,
And all imposing Flora's princely hues!
The wonders and the mysteries that link
These to a worship man will not refuse
This best and brightest charm the local vision views!

lady mentioned in the text, providentially gained the shore, and, with difficulty, recovered; but his son-in-law was picked up dead, near Black Hedley. He attempted the life of his daughter's second husband by shooting, and was ultimately hanged at Durham, for the murder of LAIRD ATKINSON, of Cannywood Side.—*Ryan*.

† As a rendezvous for pleasure seekers, pic-nic parties, Sunday School trips, &c., &c., the Spa, or Hally Well, as it used to be called, has few equals in the North of England. Situated about half-a-mile from Shotley, and in the depths of the Valley, its sylvan surroundings, to

O, these are things that wean the fretted mind,
From earth and all that cloy the sated sense,
That wake emotions deep and undefined,
But sheened with radiance of intelligence!
Green-mantled woods ascending wild and dense!
Emerald meadows stretching wide and fair!
Hearts bounding high with happiness intense!
Joy on the earth and music in the air!
The Hally Well! What life and pleasure centre there!

Mark where it springs, the almost sacred fount,
The sparkling centre of a patch of green;
And mark how high these lofty ridges mount,
This, and the world's too vulgar gaze between,
As if to hide the mysteries of the scene—
The chosen haunt of beauty, love, and lore:
This and a day unrivaled in its sheen,
Will add, methinks, a quantum to your store
Of pleasing recollections: would we all had more!

say the least, are chaste, verdant, beautiful; beautiful also, the merry laughter bursting from the young and uninitiated who, fluttering around that mystic well, are daring each other to drink. What lovely faces are twisted awry as the chained cup falls to its native place! As a health resort, Dr. ELLIS, of Newcastle, speaks very highly of the Spa. "The situation of the place is good," he says, "and the air itself is bracing and restorative." He seems to differ very widely, however, from Dr. GRANVILLE touching the medicinal properties of the water. "Its chief use," he avers, "would be in skin diseases."

Behold! the merry groups are dancing there,
As deeming in their all-transporting mirth,
That human joy ne'er darkened into care
That there was no unhappy thing on earth!
Though other thoughts in graver minds have birth,
What, what rude hand would ruffle their young dream?
Then let us bless them as we wander forth,
To trace the farther windings of the stream:
May they long, long remain as happy as they seem!

Preserve their fresh young hearts, ye powers above,
From sorrow's sore and sin's consuming blight!
And may the world, a realm of light and love
To them, be ever, as a present, bright!
Be their warm bosoms radiant with the light
That shows the glamour of seductive ill,
And lingers ever on the path of right!
And soft and silent as the dews distil
Their balm at eventide, may peace their spirits fill!

For there are things we meet ere life be o'er
That brand their record deep in mind and brain,
And centred there, become a chosen lore,
Which time and change essay to raze in vain,
The very gleam of joy may foster pain,
In spirits who too serious vigils keep;
And love, ay, sunny love, may wake a train
Of thoughts that lie unfathomably deep,
Thoughts that take hold of life, death, and its sister, sleep.

Themes deep and dread that feed the fevered heart
With tears and agitation, till their hue
Steals inch by inch the throbbing brain athwart,
And buries hope and heaven from view:
When logic moulded into forms untrue,
And science wrested from her high domain,
And fœtid lies that histories never knew,
Conspiring build a fabric most profane,
Wherein whoever treads is bled at every vein!

For then the impious wish to break the seal
That hides the secrets time shall ne'er attest,
Diffuses cancer through the moral weal
Too deeply rankling e'er to be redressed.
The thousand phases of the human breast ;
The fountains whence life's subtle currents flow ;
The stormy turmoil of its wild unrest,
What even more than angel mind can show ?
And yet, what scores are cursed with slakeless wish to know !

O! 'tis not well to give the fancy scope,
Or look on life with ever questioning eye:
Hope! thou ambrosial balm of being! Hope!
Light up the gloom of our philosophy!
The secret of our being is on high;
And life is merely universal maze,
Through which we wander groping till we die,
When we shall find, so highest wisdom says,
Its vexing mysteries lost in light's effulgent blaze.

But I forget. Away distracting gloom !
My friend—thy pardon ! and, my theme, once more.
Before us like a long and curtained room,
Behold the breezy greenwood corridor,
Whose arches built of hazel, oak, ash, fir,
Brier, broom and woodbine beautifully blent,
Embalm the road that we must hurry o'er,
With heavenly multiplicity of scent,
And frame a sylvan scene whose charm is ravishment.

And this for us ! How you will laugh to see,
The untrained acrobat's* delirious bound,
Which, sleeky coated, springs from tree to tree,
Hung with the nuts that summer days have browned.
While spinning sportive over bushy mound,
The conies urge their fascinating play ;
Or, startled by our steps' suspicious sound,
Prick their live ears and speed their rapid way
To some remoter bush or field of unmown hay

* The Squirrel

Green country lane ! So wild and yet so sweet !
Wood-fringed, grass-bordered, cool, and bloom arrayed !
What hearts aflame with first affections meet
Within the dreamy silence of your shade,
To tell the triumphs life's young loves have made,
And speed enamoured eve's delicious hour !
While bright as is the dew on grassy blade,
And soft as is the breathing of the flower,
Is that ethereal thrall which holds them in its power.

Oh ! who with heart ingrate could wander here
Oblivious of the God who made the eye ?
Or who with bosom-depths unstirred could hear
These loud joy-notes of woodland melody ?
And thus to be where song and beauty vie
In lavish wealth ! Behold on either hand
How languor-lulled the dreamy uplands lie !
Could Pan's bright bowers, or Tagus' golden strand
Divulge sublimer bliss than this resplendent land ?

Then let us wake the sylvan miles
 With rapture-lilt again
While joyous earth, approving, smiles
 A welcome to the strain.
Who treads the world's dull round and vain,
 His soul is sorely tried ;
But what supernal bliss to lay
The fretting cares of life away,
And haunt the bowers of birds and flowers
 On veering Derwentside.

The odoured woods arcadian charms
 The hawthorn's snowy bloom ;
The dreamy smile of distant farms,
 Girt with grey wreaths of fume ;
The luscious fruit that tempts the groom
 To take illicit stride ;
The rose that blushes on the hedge,
The broom that blossoms in the sedge,
Have balmed and blest my heart's unrest
 Full oft on Derwentside.

The woodbine's all deluging balm,
The violet's modest hue ;
The plaintive bleat of wandering lamb,
The answering bleat of ewe ;
The hills that soar to kiss the blue,
The wealthy field and wide,
Whence farmers' laughter dies away,
Beyond their yet ungarnered hay,
Give glory-gleams to Eden-dreams
That dawn on Derwentside.

The quiet mien of cosy cot,
Where those who never stray,
Save 'tween the hearth and garden-plot,
Laugh happy lives away :
The unwooded maid, who, caught at play,
Speeds blushing home to hide ;
The river's flower-embroidered walks,
Where visions tint the lovers' talks,
Give feeling's fire to bard and lyre,
And heaven to Derwentside.

O! when with eve's pathetic hush,
The wheel of labour's ceased;
Or dewy dawn's delicious blush,
Has goldened o'er the east;
His heart may share a rapture-feast
That God's own hands provide,
And soar seraphic heights of thought,
By wisdom's high enchantment fraught,
Who musing strays the leafy ways
That border Derwentside.

Behold the ill-starred RADCLIFFE'S* long-lost lands—
The hills whose dear possession he laid down,
And with his life, at Royalty's commands,
To glut the bursting coffers of the crown.
Howe'er the deed that damn'd his fair renown
Be fear-distorted, hate-hued rancour-glost,
The noise of other names may fail to drown
The fame he purchased at so high a cost,
Till more AMELIAS† mourn the hapless loved and lost.

* RADCLIFFE, JAMES, Third Earl of Derwentwater, who owned land on the left bank of the Derwent, was executed, and his estate forfeited to the Crown.

† About sixteen years ago, a woman, styling herself "The Countess of Derwentwater," and claiming to be a descendant of his, made no small stir in the Derwent Valley: demanded the rent from some of the farmers, and did "all she knew" to gain the lost estate. A great many

AMELIA! foiled AMELIA! Pride and power
Armed with the potent plea of partial law,
Stood at the safe-barr'd entrance to thy dower,
And swung the two-edged flaming sword of awe.
'Twas more than vain thy woman's sword to draw,
With woman's frail impotency of arm ;
And vain the scene the wondering rustic saw
That memoried day, when, hinds a thickening swarm,
Drawn by thy daring scanned astounded Newlands farm.

'Twas but the breaking of a tiny wave,
Which, when it stirred the ocean of the mind,
With court, incarceration, and a grave,
Spent its frail force and left no trace behind ;
Save that around the blazing hearth of hind
Some sunny circle may demand the tale
Of how the doughty "Countess" fought to find
The mundane mercy of the judge and jail,
Build bar on bar 'tween her and teeming Derwent Vale.

people believed in the legality of her claim ; a few, indeed, for her sake, shared the company of the turnkey. I remember standing on the hills below Medomsley, and gazing over the Valley to Newlands, a small country village, situated about a mile north of Ebchester, on the crowd who had congregated from all parts to watch her sell off a farmer who refused her the rent. That was a great day in our local annals, engaging our wiseacres in sage speculations and legal controversy for many a week. The sword-drawing incident took place at Dilston Castle, I believe. Her name was AMELIA.

And since that tempest of an hour is o'er,
And lips all law have hushed the babble war,
'Twere bootless now to weigh the legal lore
That so bedimmed her fate's unlucky star.
For, lo ! the briefs engage a higher bar,
Than that which heard her counsel urge her claim :
The breath of man may either make or mar
The blight or bloom of earthly fate or fame,
But *there* the judge is judged and all men fare the same.

But see ! we press the verge of classic land :*
Around us slumber the immortal dead !
The very earth is pregnant where we stand
With ashes that were fire, and hearts that led
The way to conquest : wheresoe'er we tread
The foot may fall on clay that held a mind
Whose daring hopes and energies were fed
With the ambition to eclipse mankind
And mount the glory-heights the fragile fail to find.

* Ebchester.

Ay! gazing through the mist of drifted time,
What themes for thought the mental eye may trace,
In memories gay, grave, sable, and sublime,
Thick, crowding round this unimposing place!
What stormy times have marred its quiet grace!
What stern-browed men have trod this leafy dell!
What deeds that damn and deify our race,
Could these sweet scenes, were they voice-gifted, tell!
For here were glory's home and virtue's convent cell.

And could we call one warrior from this sod,—
This flowery sod our careless steps assail,—
To point the path the sanguine soldiers trod
To wage th' invasive battle of the Vale,
Whose sounds no longer linger on the gale,
How would we quail beneath his shaggy brow!
Or if he deigned to tell his olden tale,
Or trace the history of his triumphs through,
How would the doubting heart his stories disavow!

Here Vindomora rose august and high,
Whence Tiber's sons went forth to border broils;
Or, sleeping, saw with dream-deluded eye,
The charging armies, the colossal spoils;
Or, reckless of the day's consuming toils,
Filled the long night with song and revel glee;
Or laughing, talked o'er the ingenious wiles
That scattered the unwary enemy,
Or sanguine, hope-enjoyed the triumphs yet to be.

Ay, here immured, the immortal sons of Rome,
Secure in their unconquerable might,
Have deemed, in their invulnerable home,
The world their own inalienable right,
For which, 'twas their most glorious fate to fight!
How oft the glens were hued with clotted gore,
Where now the eye reposes with delight!
For as they bade the eagled ensign soar
Their martial prowess shook the Vale from shore to shore.

Fleet from the leafy fortress of the wood,
Fleet from th' impervious rampart of the hill,
The Britons fled the sanguinary flood
That rolled triumphant at the Romans' will.
For when they met and tested skill by skill,
The Isle's first owners dropping dense around
Found less and less their gory gaps to fill,
Till inch by inch the long-contested ground,
Girt with great CÆSAR'S world-inthralling will was found.

And here they sate and watched the brooding war;
Or planned, maybe, the stretching Watling Way,*
The distant vallum and the castled bar,†
Upreared to hold the daring Scots at bay.
For even though the Britons owned their sway,
Yon heathy land was warm with savage foes,
To whom great Rome imparted no dismay,
Who, crowding where that bar defensive rose,
Oft dared AGRICOLA'S might, and SEVERUS' sturdy blows.

* The Roman military road, or Watling Street, crossed the river here.

† The barrier of the Lower Isthmus, or the Roman Wall, extending from Wallsend-on-Tyne to Bowness, in Cumberland. On, or near the wall, were placed at tolerably regular intervals, stationary camps or "stations," about seventeen or eighteen in number; and, at still shorter intervals, that is, about a Roman mile from each other, were placed smaller towers, called, from this circumstance, "Mile Castles." These were, in general, placed against the south side of the wall, and had mostly only one entrance, which was from the south; a few, however,

And here they bade the god-loved incense burn,
 And here they poured the god-appeasing prayer,
 And here they left the altar and the urn
 To tell *our* sages what *their* dogmas were.
 For though their huge world broke, the very air
 Is pregnant with its fragments:‡ mead and mound
 Have each a sacred treasure to lay bare;
 And even 'neath this memory-hallowed ground,
 The storied atoms of that shattered world are found.

But, ah, methinks, had Britons been inured
 To sword and shield as much as pastoral wand,
 Here, Tiber's sons had never been immured ;
 For sturdy frame, stout heart, and powerful hand
 Ne'er lined the menaced shores of one fair land,
 Like those they conquered but could not enslave ;
 And soon as e'er th' invaders swarmed the strand
 Albion had waved her violets o'er their grave
 Had but the nomads known the arts that guide the brave. §

had two entrances, one on the south, and another through the main wall on the north.

‡ The Roman altars, sculptured fragments, inscribed stones, coins, implements of war, articles of personal adornment, utensils for domestic use, &c., which have been found along the line of the wall, are extremely numerous. And Eborac is not destitute of those sacred treasures. Some of them, indeed, have found a sanctuary in the present church ; and some years ago, when the churchyard was being extended, I had the pleasure of gazing on some of them myself.

§ I think I am expressing the consentient opinion of all historians

Yet, shall we let no plaintive censure fall;
For, Romans, souls like noon-day suns were yours,
Whose glory seemed to sanctify the thrall
And gild with glory all your gory hours!
Hence while ye lingered in these quiet bowers,
They learned to love ye whom ye did such wrong;
And even while ye revell'd on their dowers,
No hate disturbed the spirit of their song
Which rose to give you cheer and glad your festal throng.

Nay! Ye became their guardians. Like a rock
That spurns the fury of the bursting tide,
Stood your proud crests between them and the shock
Of bloody battle and aggressive pride,
Till ye became endearingly allied
Great Rome and old Britannia! 'Twas in vain
That plundering Pict or Caledonian tried
To charge one bushel with Northumbria's grain,
While brave AGRICOLA ruled or HADRIAN held his reign.

when I say that the ancient Britons were equal with the Romans in valour, and that, had they been a martial, instead of a patriarchal people, the second invasion might have been as inglorious as the first. Even TACITUS, himself, speaks very highly of their bravery, and intimates that it was rather a lucky job for CÆSAR that the Britons were not schooled, as the Romans were, in the arts of war. Even as it was, had they been united, instead of divided against themselves, they might have repulsed the invaders.

Nay, your great toils come down to bless *our* day:
For, masters of the missionary mind,
How have you urged Britannia's radiant way
From gloom to glory! As your arts refined,
She razed and strewed her mud huts in the wind;
Put on her laurel wreath, and took her stand
Amongst the greatest, wisest of mankind!
'Twas not for nought ye laboured in our land,
For in that labour gleamed a God's evolving hand!*

2.

As angry ocean rising wild and dread,
May dash to earth a nation's wealth in ore,
Which still had been unrecked of in its bed,
Had not the tempest shook the trembling shore;
So Derwent trembled till your wrath was o'er,
Then felt the sweetness of supernal calm:
For with you came the soul-illuming lore,
To shake the fabric of religious sham,
And point deluded souls to God's Eternal Lamb.†

* Britain owed to Rome, not only her first steps in the path of civilisation; but her municipal government, a code of written laws, judges to interpret them, and civil, instead of priestly tribunals; whilst, at the same time, her arts and refinements gradually wrought a change in the savage, but warlike character of the people, who, previous to their invasion, lived in a state of barbarism, inhabiting wretched huts, built in the rudest form. Rome gained nothing by the conquest of Britain, but sowed the seeds of a civilisation more endurable than her own dominion.

† The tradition that St. PAUL and St. PETER preached the Gospel in

They came and conquered, gazed, and turned away,
To quell the brooding of domestic wars,
And, lo, there knelt Irminsal's † sons to pray,
Where knelt to pray, so late, the sons of Mars.
But not for long the mind-impeding bars
Of Rheda, Odin, Hertha blurred the hours; ‡
What darkest night is barren of its stars?
And who but now, bequeathed such damning dowers, §
Bid one lone lovely heart imparadise these bowers.

This classic, now, was consecrated soil;
Hope, heavenly hope illumed the home of fear;
For EBBA reared her high and hallow'd pile,
In other days assigned to fate severe,
That she might nurse the cloistered virtues here.
And beaming star-like comes her lovely name,
Bright down the ages drifting dark and drear;
Time, the great sifter of the good man's fame,
Gives hers the dazzling glow of gold-reflected flame.

the island found, at one period, general credence. There is, however, not the slightest historical evidence to support it; still, it is certain that, at a very early age, Christianity was introduced amongst us. Many of the Romans, who had received the new religion and fled from the persecutions of CLAUDIUS and NERO, found refuge in Britain, where the imperial edicts were less rigorously obeyed, till the persecution of DIOCLETIAN, when the churches throughout the empire were ordered to be closed, and the refusal of the new sect to offer sacrifice to the gods of Rome punished with death.

† The Saxons. Their religion, like that of the most of the people of

And here she wept and told her higher trust,
And fann'd the Christian embers into flame,
Till spears went through Irminsal's awful bust,¶
And Saxon hearts revered a holier name.
And mark, my friend, if EBBA's race became
More worthy of the appellative great,
'Twas her high creed—a creed they could not tame
By bitterest scourging—that reversed their fate,
And taught their souls to soar above their native state.

Then take our praise, PAULINUS,|| holy seer !
For the initiatory deed was thine :
And, lo, the seed thy hand implanted here,
Is towering now in majesty divine ;
And breathing balsam healing and benign,
O'er all the thousand forms of human woe !
Glad, glad is Derwent now with many a shrine,
Whose sacred light may cease no more to glow,
Till all her wild groves vie with Eden's virgin blow !

Germany, was a gross idolatry, founded on the worship of the powers of nature. Fire and water were personified in their goddess, Hertha. Rheda and Odin were also among their divinities ; and to their great idol, Irminsal, they sacrificed human victims.

§ The Christians suffered fearfully at their hands ; priests were murdered on the altars ; bishop and flock perished by fire and sword ; and yet these people gave Jarrow a Venerable BEDE, and Ebbesburgh a St. EBBA.

¶ This happened in the reign of EDWIN, King of Northumbria, after that memorable council was called of the Northumbrian nobles, to

O, oft, methinks in sultry summer noon,
Through breezy depths of ferny-floored arcade,
The wealthy wardrobe of ambrosial June,
By God's own emerald drapery garmented,
As soothing winds' innocuous dalliance laid,
The sweet-lipp'd daisy prone to kiss the brook,
The saintly maiden wandered and surveyed
The laughing page of nature's blotless book,
And drank instruction high from every sylvan nook.

Or urged, maybe, to seek these sunny bowers,
That, shaded, she might lave her tripping feet,
Where now yon rude dam-cascade thundering pours
The potent waters swift their goal to greet;
Or where with throbbing roar and mystic beat,
They tread the mill's grain-grinding paddled wheel,
Their sound might seem as voice of paraclete;
And as she viewed the river's winsome reel,
What visions of vexed life athwart her brain might steal!

discuss the respective merits of Christianity and Paganism, over which the young monarch presided, and at a village still called Godmundan, which signifies the home or hamlet of the enclosure of the God. COIFI, the Pagan high priest, was the sacrilegious spearman.

|| The first man who preached the Gospel in Northumbria. King ENWIN was the first of his royal converts, and, having built a religious edifice at York, the young King made PAULINUS Archbishop of the See. "The Derwent, and the Swale, in Yorkshire, are rivers associated with his mission."—*Greenwell*.

Or haply where these gardens blush with bloom,
The blest prospective dawned upon her ken
When men should cease to harrow and consume
The hearts and hopes and homes of fellowmen.
But human dreams ! ah, me ! lo ! even then
Dread human wolves, blood-drunk, were on her track,
And sniffed afar the lamb's devoted pen !
Prone lying all things like a whirlwind black,
They came, consuming came, the fell and savage pack !

The Danes ! the Danes ! how stifled hearts grew chill,
And whispered low the dark and impious name !
Or, warning louder, cried—They kill ! they kill !
And fled the scenes of sacrilege and shame.
Who, plundering, wrapt St. OSWIN's* shrine in flame?
Who stormed the cloister of the sainted BEDE?*Who dealt damnation dark where'er they came ?
The Danes ! Sweet maid, well might thy bosom bleed !
Their very names might shake the bravest like a reed !

* Those of my readers who are aware that the monastery at Ely was destroyed soon after 660, and that the monasteries at Tynemouth and Jarrow were not destroyed until 794, may charge me with getting ahead of my story. Well, if I have ? The fact still remains that St. EBBA was hunted from her lovely retreat on the Derwent, by, at any rate, the same class of men as those who plundered the cloisters of the Tyne ; and I did not deem it necessary to pay absolute deference to chronology in a case of this sort. I have taken the Danes as I have found them in history, and if I have painted them any darker than they *were*, I beg *their* pardon !

Were they not schooled in craft as foul as hell's?
Their blood-streaked flame-path stretched from zone to zone!
For lo! their breasts were blazing arsenals!
And O! to them the music of the moan,
When sword and flame licked-up the flesh and bone!
Their very glee was steeped in Hades' hue!
And theirs were hearts that devils wouldn't own!
The crimes that Pandemonium blush to view,
Lie rank upon their souls or history isn't true!

Had they come here as Roman came before,
Who with the sabre sought a deathless name,
Then had we with a pitying sigh passed o'er
Their deeds of death and catalogues of shame;
But theirs were breasts unkindled by a flame
Of higher feeling. Nay! their gods were lust!
The end of their existence and its aim,
Forever drew them, grovelling, to the dust,
And so their memories live to putrify and rust!

They came, and lo, this heaven blazed a hell !
The prowling plunderers gloated in its glow !
Crash, stone by stone, the crackling cloister fell !
Fear shrieked to fear, and woe loud wailed to woe !
Thus was her long-loved home laid crumbling low,
And with that all the heaven of her heart ;
And, fear-pursued, she fled, a stricken doe,
As flees before the angry hound, the hart,
O'er far outstretching moor and forest's savage part !

She fled, but hapless maid, where could she fly?
Or whither turn to find a place of rest ?
Here lay the last sad vestige of her joy,
The life-dream dashed so rudely from her breast !
Though other loves essayed to make her blest,
To 'wake and warm the dreams the Danes had dimm'd,
Here smouldered low the home she loved the best,
Her valley home, the home wherein she hymn'd
The God and all the good her maiden fancy limn'd !

And crushed with life's too many woes she fell :
But no sage record points to where she lies,*
Nor on whose breast she gasped her last farewell,
Nor when, nor where she closed her languid eyes
On these her native meadows and bright skies :
As Moses mounted Pisgah's lofty height
And gave his being to the mysteries,
So EBBA, gazing on the land of light
Unepitaphed lay down to brook no farther flight.

As gleams th' electric meteor through the sky,
Diffusing silvery grandeur on its way,
Which for a moment dazzles mortal eye,
Then sinks into oblivion for aye,
Her bright existence glowed and waned away :
But oft as pondering o'er the page profound
That limns with varied light her fitful day,
The fancy comes that by some flowery mound,
Which skirts her dear old home she sleeps the centuries round.

* St. EBBA's burial place is unrecorded.

O! thou hast seen strange things delightful Vale!
And yet thou art as beautifully fair,
As when thy protomartyrs' dying wail
Went up to heaven through thine aroma'd air!
Crimes on man's brow an awful aspect wear,
And flash a flame delirious from his eye;
But I can see no traces here nor there
Of any crimes of *thine*! Thy songs are high,
Thy meadows are all bloom, all sheen thine azure sky!

Behold thy wealth of health and beauty now!
The farmer's laugh loud ringing o'er the lea,
The matron's smile, the maiden's glowing brow,
The busy tongues of innocence and glee,
The snowy head of reverend reverie,
And all the loves and graces life can give
Are breathing their sublime humility
Where pride, pomp, power, hate, lust, were wont to live,
And where they yelled: "revenge!" we sigh and say: "forgive!"

Were not for us the flame-yoke and the gall!
Swept one by one from being's busy stage,
The Roman, Saxon, Dane, no more appal,
Nor fear we now the Norman's maddening rage.
The wars are hushed that they were wont to wage;
The bale banditti and their gods are—gone!
And as we strive to limn that gory age,
Or catch but half its aggregative groan,
How doubly dear becomes the glories of our own!

But where, O, where are they who gave the good—
The guerdon of their immortality?
As silent as the waves of lethe's flood,
On these and far on other shores they lie:
And as we gaze into the depths of sky,
Beneath whose cope they trod their round of toil,
The heart goes forth in gratitude and joy;
For though there came to desecrate and spoil,
There came whose memories make this more than hallow'd soil

The teeming harvests of their toils are ours;
The toilers, death through all the years inthrals;
Great Vinomora wheels in dusty showers;
Far scattered whirl the cloister's crumbled walls;
And ere the fate, relentless, that befalls,
All human works had left us but their site,
The trustful prayer that on the Highest calls,
Winged with the fervour of the anchorite,
Rose through their shattered domes in search of love and light.

And who could wish for more seclusive scene
To pay the heart's warm tribute of high praise?
How amply fit these wild arcades and green
To light and bid love's burning altar blaze!
How sweet the flow of unmolested days
That held him here safe-sheltered from the strife
And all the ills that crowd the checkered maze,
Or vex the seething sea of human life,
Till with the wrecks of men its subtle waves are rife!

And as he quaffed the valley's wood-verged wave,
Or plucked the browning offering of the wood,
How would he bless the full-filled Hand that gave
The rich luxuriance of prolific good!
Or as he bade the passions be subdued,
Or glowed imagination soared and sought
The far-inviting region of the cloud,
With what full force would come the burning thought
That God is all in all and vaunting man is—nought!

But once again the swift-encroaching night
Steals, lowering, o'er the hermit's home of bowers,
Black-mantles spangled mead and shaggy height
And darklings o'er this dear delight of ours:
Else had the muse sang through the coming hours,
The vow long-broken and the blazing arm,*
The joy-blest homes where calm content immures,
The untold wonder and the huge alarm
That, whilom, Hedley kow† bore round from farm to farm.

* Tradition says that there lived at Ebchester a man who made a vow that he would leave nothing to his son on account of the latter having offended him, and added the wish, if he did leave him anything that his right arm might be burned off. The vow was broken; the old man died; the wish was realized! His arm took fire in the coffin and was burned off!

† A rather mischievous ghost of the olden times that had its "head-quarters" at Hedley, but came down to Ebchester occasionally to do a little of its ghostly business. One might tell some funny stories about

But we must part. Good-bye, my friend, good-bye!
We linger, loath to leave such things benign;
But if to-morrow spread congenial sky,
As bright a bliss awaits thy heart and mine.
And so good night—supernal dreams be thine!
Thus feeds the heart on hope from day to day:
Another morn for us may never shine,
And yet the petty plans of life we lay
As though its waning light would never burn away!

this visionary creature, only this is not the place to relate them. Those who would like to know more about it may consult RICHARDSON'S Table Book.

THE DERWENT VALLEY.



CANTO THIRD.



DEDICATED TO LIZZIE.

Dedication.

My better self, my best, my dearest life!
The mirror into which I gaze and see
The settled calm to all my bosom strife,
Not what I am, but what I ought to be—
The man that swims in ideality!
'Tis much because thy fate is joined to mine,
And much because of thy great love to me,
And much because whate'er I have is thine,
And much because transcendent moments intertwine

Their memories, blest and radiant, with my theme,
That I would have thy name adorn my lay:
For Derwent saw the dawn of love's young dream
Break, bright and blushing, o'er thy budding May,
And glad me with its glow. 'Twas heaven to stray
Those mazy windings with thee, as thine eyes
Drank in the glory of the glad survey,
Or kindled with the eloquent surprise
That earth should be so fair, yet hold no paradise.

Through Cut Throat Lane, or Chopwell's wealthy woods,
As parting day was fading from the hill;
Or through the wild and sylvan solitudes
That garment and environ Hedley Mill
With beauty that is peerless, 'twas to fill
High moments with a rapture that was real,
To have thy converse when the eve was still—
Bright hours from life's too busy toil to steal,
And rove transported through the realms of the ideal.

For then, and there, the visions born of joy,
That painted untried years so passing fair!
The love too deep to dream of earth-alloy!
The seraph fervour dreamt of only where
God smiles, approving, through the balmy air,
On heart-wed lovers in their summer bowers!
The high and holy heart-communion there!
And, as we couched among the ferns and flowers,
The bliss unbreathed that held us captive through the hours!

And though the fair-limn'd future that we dreamed
Has dawned, and is—mundane reality;
Though life is not so lovely as it seemed
Far-stretched before young love's too hopeful eye;
Have we not learned to bear it patiently,
And from its fitful moments of repose
To snatch some fragments of abiding joy,
To even gather wisdom from its woes?
And what can man do more from life's dawn till its close?

Then let dame fortune curl her angry brows!
Her minions may have woes as dark as we:
And while the veering valley of our vows
Invites the ruminating memory,
We shall not tune our hearts to dolour's key.
Arm linked in arm, and cheerful, urge we on;
Heart blent with heart we face futurity;
And weave we here our names with moments gone,
Till Time's sure touch shall blot these lines out one by one.

The Derwent Valley.

CANTO THIRD.

How swiftly speeds the stealthy step of Time,
That bears us onward to the vast unknown!
Throb! throb! the world's great heart beats out its rhyme.
Tick! tick! the glow of human life is gone!
But now deluging LUNE refulgent shone
The central light in night's huge chandelier;
And now august APOLLO reigns alone,
And billowy light is flung from sphere to sphere,
And twangs the golden bow of sky's great charioteer!

Now we are wandering through the world of dreams,
And now the world of stern reality;
Now comes respite to toil and tyrant schemes,
And now we're plunged in all the cares that be.
And thus the moment-fed life-shuttles flee:
O! that the wefts were brighten'd with the deeds
That tell high stories to Eternity!
For wheresoe'er life's little journey leads,
'Twere well to sow the heart with less of venal seeds,

For self and mammon cleave the world atwain,
And lives are blasted ere they bloom a day;
And strength grips weakness till it writhes again,
Or cloven-hearted, weeps itself away;
And brazen pomp, gay-ribbon'd, hies to pay
His heavy bills with human flesh and blood;
And gouty idleness and despot-sway,
Ride, grinding, o'er the groaning multitude,
And hardened guilt grows fat on labour's honest food!

The very bishops fatten on their flock,
And who are deemed the delegates of heaven,
Who have the saints' elysium to unlock,
And see that mortals die not unforgiven,
Hoodwink the world: and when, misfortune-driven,
The hungry and the homeless cry for bread,
The Lazarus-portion is not even given,
But Bible-verse and dogma-creed instead:
And thus the fat saints thrive, and thus the poor are fed.

Ay! "Feed my lambs," the last beloved behest
That cinctured Zion's consecrated brow,
Is, like a wornout bacchanalian jest,
Or lied away, or disregarded now!
And though a thousand fervid lips avow
Their equal love to friend and foeman dire,
And sprinkle shrines with orisons enow,
The poor must club their pence to pay the "hire,"
And lo! the greed of gain puts out the pulpit-fire.

Religion! fair religion! mourn with me,
The prostitutiou of thy name for clay!
Shall great BALADAN never bend the knee,
When sin sits down by sorrow's side to pray?
O! rip the rags of rottenness away
That flaunt their filth where mercy's flags unfurled!
And with the light whose darkness dims thy day,
Swift be their slander into Hades hurled,
Who pledge the pearl to buy the flesh pots of the world!

Of thine own household are thy foes most fell:
The scorner's laugh, the sceptic's withering sneer,
Are baby's toy, and idiot's bagatelle,
Which wise men are discarding year by year.
But, O, when Israel cries: "The Lord is here!"
And walks the earth as MAMMON walked on high,*
The taunt is too abominably severe
To be connived at by society!
O, thou art foully wronged, or life enacts a lie!

Great God! If there be such a home as hell
Where devils damn'd lave blazing lava lake!
Where pain eternal and inexorable,
Excruciates *our* kindred till they make
The deep and black-charred, flame-licked caverns shake,
Were it not hell, to *dream* of such a hell?
Were it believed the world's great heart would break!
And yet the teachers who its tortures tell,
Are blithe as summer birds or elves in fairy dell!

*MILTON informs us that MAMMON walked the heavens with his eyes forever on the golden pavement.

But this is not my theme. O rambles rare!
O, copse and cove, and greenwood wide and wild!
The hearts who haunt you find congenial fare,
Ye homes, ye holy homes of nature's child!
My friend! Come forth and have thy heart beguiled
From the enthrallment of low things again!
What hills more verdure-blest were ever piled,
Than these around this unimposing fane,*
That rears on Derwent's rim unsculptured walls and plain?

There sheltering, drooping yew and frailer flowers,
That claim the tender care of pious hands,
The talisman of dear and drifted hours,
The home of sainted memories—there it stands.
Shrine of the rustic hind and toiling bands
Of simple hearts and lowly! if a tear
Well from its fountain as the soul expands
To compass old associations here,
'Tis warm as those that love sheds over beauty's bier!

* Wesleyan Chapel at Blackhall Mill.

But let us mark for one glad moment more,
The blending beam and bloom of nature's face:
High on this bank sweet-sloping to the shore,
And mantled by a verdure-tinted grace,
That pen may try, but try in vain, to trace,
The ravished eye of admiration sees,
Built, as if yearning for the wood's embrace,
A mean, brick row, half hid behind the trees,
That looks through foliage-rifts on these ascending leas!

There, weary miners, black from "borde" and "lift,"
And reeking from the round of routine dull,
Divulge the earnings, dangers of the "shift,"
And give, as they the soothing cutty pull,
Their views on labour *versus* capital;
Or scan the future with prophetic ken,
Or from some honoured tome some passage cull,
To prove there *is* to dawn a future when
Their much-wronged class shall be esteemed like other men.

What, if they do, perhaps, too crudely mix
Sublimer themes with humble hamlet lore;
Or mingle self with creeds and politics,
And vend th' approven ware from door to door?
Their lucky lords, though wiser, do no more.
'Tis not enough the pharisaical plea!
And yet the prayer ascends from meanest floor—
Forbid ye gods, that ever I should see,
These dusky creatures elbow side by side with me!

O! fools and blind and big with little pride,
To deem, because your brothers toil below,
That you have but to buffet and deride,
To bid your stature of importance grow!
'Tis not for nought whoever serves them so:
The man that wrongs the meanest thing alive,
Shall stagger neath the retributive blow,
Which, soon or late, shall potently arrive:
To give us as we give the laws of life contrive,

'Tis not because my heart has borne their woes,
Nor that I've shared the burden of their toil,
That I would or their vice or virtue glose,
Or hymn them through their stretch of thorny moil.
But they have hearts to hurt, and hopes to spoil,
And pride to blast and bosoms to degrade;
And life's deep springs too warmly burning boil,
For idiot mirth or ignominious trade,
Built upon woes too deep or to be sung or said!

But, gaze around thee. Veering through the vale,
The bright, land-lessening Derwent frets her way,
As smoothe in flow as lovers' creamy tale,
And glad as is the glee of children's play.
But, O, what wilder pleasure to survey
Her big waves, tumbling wild with heavy rain,
Bound o'er embankment and obstructive stay,
Deluge these doors, and flood the Pear Tree Lane,*
And sheet large, yellow lakes o'er all this petty plain!

* The Pear Tree is a name given to a farm situated on the north side of the Derwent, and at the bottom part, or east end of the Blackhall Mill Village. The lane leading from the farm opens on a ford. This ford is generally shallow and very passable, but in rainy weather, it is not only impassable, but the lane, itself, is sometimes flooded. When the river is what the Blackhall Mill people call "hig," the houses built on the rim of the river are often menaced with a watery invasion. I have seen it at the door sills myself. Nobody who only sees it in dry weather can have any idea of the height it sometimes arrives at.

How passing fair the leagues that BULMAN* sung!
The minstrel lost to even local fame,
Who deftest chord from lute and violin flung,
And thus enamoured breathed the inner flame.
He walked those wild arcades till they became
Things that he loved with the devoted love
We breathe around a child that bears our name:
The softest sighs that winnow summer grove,
Were musical to him as voices from above.

There, lone and lost among his native woods,
The home from which he first beheld the day;
And there the depths of sylvan solitudes
That woke the fervour of his infant lay;
And there he winged the memoried years away
That men look back to when the heart is worn,
And fondly wish that life's remembered May,
Would ape the vernal month that decks the thorn,
And freshening o'er their hearts, with all its balm return.

*JOSEPH BULMAN was born at Newhouse, a small farm situated on the left bank of the Derwent, and about a half-a-mile north west of Blackhall Mill, June 11th, 1833. He was a musician of considerable ability, and a votary of the muse. He lived here until he was nineteen years of age, when he left for Hexham Station, where he had got a situation on the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway. His father was farm bailiff to R. SURTEES, Esq., and also rented a farm under the same gentleman for a number of years. He left Hexham at the wish of the Directors, and was put into the Audit Office, at Newcastle, and, subsequently, into the Manager's Office. He was then invited to a situation in the Union Bank, in Newcastle, and thence to their Office

O! dreams of youth! translucent dreams of youth!
In life's dark canopy, the only stars!
How well you hide from our young hearts the truth
That life leads on and on through wars to wars!
'Tis only when we feel the battle-scars,
And we begin to falter at our post
That you grow lovely! O, he errs! he errs!
Who flies a flag too brightly glory-glost!
For, ah! what world-wealth won's worth half the heart-wealth
lost?

The world cries: "Glory!" when its heroes fall,
Nor questions what the bosom-conquests be:
Who wins most gold, most fame, or steeps in gall
Most worlds, is worshipped like a deity:
The outer glare is all the world can see.
But even they that bask in glory's blaze,
May find some cloud-spots in their destiny,
And curse the lavish mock'ry of our praise,
As oft as the changed heart returns to youthful days!

at Sunderland, where he was soon incapacitated by consumption. He removed to Ryton for the sake of his health, and died there at the early age of twenty-eight years, lamented by a large circle of friends. From a small volume of poems published after his death, I have taken these facts, and I should have quoted a specimen of his powers as a poet, but space will not permit. His poetry, in some cases, shows signs of hurry and imperfect execution, but, considering his progress in business, one cannot be surprised at this. Some of his poems, such as "Why do the breezes sigh?" are not only well conceived but well executed and exquisitely tender.

For life's a losing battle: as we grow,
So closing round us grows the thickening war;
And we must deal stern forces blow for blow,
And cleave, bare-handed, many a blazing bar
That thwarts high-aiming purpose, till we mar
Ourselves in the mean struggle for earth-good,
And lower into the selfish things we are.

Ah! in that awful bosom-solitude

When conscience cries: "Look back!" what hearts have writhed
and rued!

And what gain we by wrangling all our days?
A brief retirement from the babble roar,
A league of land, a breath of peevish praise,
A little gold, a grave, and all is o'er!
Our youthful hearts demanded something more:
'Twas not *their* wish to sit in places high,
And bid a thousand parasites adore
The pomp of pride, the purse-supremacy—

The things, in after years, we measure statures by!

No! all unworthy of our young heart's love,
Are these sham badges of the seeming great;
For then we lived sky-cleaving heights above
The mean dominion of the man's estate.
But, O, how natural to degenerate!
For when we feel the burden of our clay,
The years roll o'er us with tremendous weight,
And life's prospectives dressed in colours gay,
Grow dim, and yet more dim, as young dreams fade away.

Hence the supernal pleasure to retrace
The scenes that saw our infant years flow by;
The time-changed lineament of form and face,
The dawning, waning, of remembered joy.
And so to me whate'er invites the eye—
The forge, the farm, the Loop, the neighbouring rill,
Brings back the past all fresh and feelingly,
And links my heart and soul to Blackhall Mill,
And these surrounding heights Broad Oak and Ash Tree Hill.

For here, ere those transcendent days were fled,
That caught their colour from the fresh heart's sheen,
How oft by ardent admiration led,
Have I, lone musing, trod these leagues of green!
Where Chopwell Church stands crumbling lank and lean,
O'er pews whose only function is to fall,
Or Armon Side sits couched her hills between,
Or Milkwell Burn rears wood environed wall,
Or antique Cobbler's House looks down on old Black Hall.*

But we have still supernal things to note,
And we must bid our dreams a dear adieu,
To haunt the shaggy scenes of Derwent Cote†
Whose beauties wait to bless the hearts they woo.
Here, ash, oak, poplar, chestnut, greet the view;
There, all the beam and blow of bloom and buds;
Here, garden walks split plots of blossoms through;
And, hark! the huge forge hammer thundering thuds,
And wakes, resounding loud, the echoes of the woods.

* All the places mentioned in this and the preceding stanzas are in the immediate vicinity of Blackhall Mill, the latter place being about a mile below Ebchester, and about two miles above Lintz Green. The surroundings of Blackhall Mill are exceeding picturesque. Ash Tree Hill commands a fine view of Pontop Pike on the south, and on the east and west, the eye may follow the winding of the valley for many a teeming mile, and sprinkled, as they are, with scattered cots, farms, and villages, the pilgrim finds himself amply repaid for toiling to its top. Blackhall Mill, too, is associated with the German refugees.

† See page 103.

Here splintered rocks, by long-spent forces torn
From native beds, conglomerated lie,
Rich with the stories of convulsions born
In some dim, prehistoric century;
There walls of woods ascending green and high,
Bend o'er the shaggy brow of precipice,
Till all the limitless expanse of sky
Is circumscribed to vault but only this
Sublime crag-based, wood-crowned, and water-floored abyss.

And see! through this long cleft of riven rock,
The compressed waves in one deep volume glide
And carve, as if they strove man's art to mock,
Fantastic figures on the stony side.
Behold! could art more fittingly provide
The almost perfect flower pots shapen here?
Or prop the sandy layer-joints, gaping wide,
With pillars so fantastically queer,
As these the wheeling waves are framing as they veer?*

* Following the course of the river from Blackhall Mill you pass Derwent Cote. Here you meet with a lovely piece of scenery, and, if you follow the river from here to Lintz Ford, the beauty brightens as you proceed. You will have many a scramble and tumble, but you will not mind that; and when you come to a certain point in your course, called "Paradise," you will stop, sit down, and cry "delightful!" I need not describe its exact whereabouts, for you will know it when you come to it. What I have said about "figures," "pillars," "flower pots," is literally correct. But what is description? I would advise all my readers to go and see for themselves.

Thus, winding seaward down her shelvy bed,
Or filtering through the verging sedge and sand,
Or cleaving meads all clover-garmented,
Or hid away from vision's rapt command,
The Derwent runs her lovely course and grand.
But o'er the banks, and through the woods, away!
The SURTEES' home,* as genial as the land
That woos their juicied sickle, bids us stay,
And, with adoring hearts, exultingly survey.

Lo! there it stands the mansion of the good,
That culture's rapt eye lingers to adore;
The home of worth, an altar in the wood,
The hall that holds within its open door,
The guardian angels of the neighbouring poor!
How oft the needy heart and desolate
Has blessed the bounty of their generous store!
How few, whatever colour be their fate,
Shall wander here and leave no blessing at their gate!

* Hamsterley Hall, the seat of the Misses SURTEES, on the south side of the Derwent, about a mile from Lintz Green Station, and about midway between Burnopfield and Ebchester. Surrounded by Hamsterley Woods, and possessed of magnificent gardens and vineries, it enjoys a seclusion as lovely as anything that nature and art can give. But what endears it most of all to the people of the neighbourhood, are the SURTEES themselves, who, unlike the generality of the great, stoop to *bless* instead of *crush*, and rule by love instead of fear. When Mrs. SURTEES died, some eight years ago, I remember, what a host of poor, but earnest mourners she had.

Here, sheltered from the world's too vulgar glare,
The mind may burst the earth-bonds that controlled
Her finer workings, and on things that were,
And are, hold converse deep and manifold.
For here is built an Eden in the wold,
And air is stifled with the rich perfume;
And here the heaven-touched lips of genius told
The burthen of its beauty to illume
With better light, the years of long historic gloom.

And here, who spurred the fleet-hoofed steed apace,
When howling hound sniffed reynard in the breeze,
Spun line by line and clad with lettered grace
His split-side "Jorrock's Jaunts and Jollities."
While thought can thrill, or art has power to please,
Or love can warm the heart with hallow'd fire,
These walks, these woods, these farm enlivened leas—
Their whilome haunts who lived to lift us higher—
What grateful bard shall rove regardless of his lyre?

Ye bowers of wild luxuriance summer-hued,
How sweet to wander neath your pensive shade;
To feel the weary, world-worn heart renewed,
With rich aroma from the breezy glade!
And, O, could pen depict as eye surveyed,
My humble line, how ample were thy thrall!
But yet not all the glories that pervade
The scenes on which the eyes of rapture fall,
May cheer the heart as cheers this hospitable Hall.

Heaven dower the home that nursed the truly great,
That shelters still the truly generous fair!
Hale be their hearts to handle their estate,
Light be the burthen of their tithe of care!
Or if they feel the common woes that wear
The heart with dark endurance, when they bleed,
Be Thy great aid forever lingering there,
As ample as their maximum of need,
Who quenched no smoking flax, nor broke one bruised reed

But hail, again, ye wild and winding ways
Through tangled dene and hazel-roofed recess;
Ye bright and breezy meads and primrose braes
That, laughing, woo the zephyr's warm caress,
And spread your sheen the pilgrim's eye to bless!
Where calm Steel Close in blest seclusion hides,
And fair Lintz Ford is lost in loveliness,
And yon dismantled Friar's fane* divides
Its walls 'tween storm and time sweet-beckoning beauty guides.

On, o'er the white road stretching through the wood,
And see, what teeming prospects greet the gaze!
How sweet to bask in nature's sunny mood
When every water-ripple is ablaze
With the refulgence of meridian rays!
For then is hushed the ruffled world within,
And dawns the wisdom of superior ways:
How mean the man-world, with its busy din,
To this, begemmed with pink of rose and gold of whin!

* This Gothic Chapel at Friarside, was a monastic dependency, and one of the first religious institutions suppressed by HENRY VIII

'Tis only when, as now, we breathe apart
From fretted life, that we may truly scan
The huge dimensions of the human heart—
That world-embracing compass of a span
Where heaven and hell conjoined when life began,
And deity and devil wage the war
That makes the mystery of enigma man,
That wonder-world of harmony and jar
Born into being—how? And hurrying—how far?

Not he who takes the current with the crowd,
Nor he who, moth-like, lingers round the glare
Of artificial venture, is allowed
The glimpses of the heart of life laid bare:
By him alone who prays and ponders where
No footfall save his own imprints the sward,
The music-burdened voices of the air,
The low ethereal melodies are heard,
Sublimed with softer notes than carols of a bird.

The temples of the solitudes are rife
With rich and rare communion. Bird and bee,
Field-flower and grass—symbolical of life—
May ask a thousand questions which, if we
Could answer, one might hope, in some degree,
That science, after flights and falls, may tear
The veil from off the face of mystery,
And lay the life of man and nature bare
To all who haunt the mart of literary ware.

But as it is, and hemmed around by sense,
We only gaze and wonder; but that gaze
Rewards us with a happiness intense;
That wonder melts our spirits into praise.
And thus we tread the providential maze
Of mystery; but accustomed to the dark,
We feel the Father who has mapped our ways,
And guides us through the gloom. But see! and hark!
High over Gibside Woods how gayly sings the lark!

There, hill-supported, backed by oak and fir
The crowning pile sits gazing down the slope
That guides the gaze, enraptured, to the shore
And wanders through a thousand charms that ope
Their sylvan bosoms to the azure cope:
To mark the sweetness of its dreamy air,
'Twould seem that nought of disappointed hope
Or thorn of heart had ever rankled there,
And yet, what memories foul are blending with its fair!

The withering presence of a busy curse
Stands black between its beauty and the eye:
As when an April storm has spent its force,
But left its trace upon the cope of sky,
The lingering blight of one dark memory*
Blurs all these teeming glens. Strive as we may,
We cannot put the grisly phantom by:
And there it stands, a ghost we cannot lay,
And throws its sable self o'er all that we survey.

* The story of "STONEY BOWES," or, if you please, ANDREW ROBINSON STONEY BOWES, Esq., is, perhaps, too well known to need repeating here. I might just say, however, for the sake of those who may be unacquainted with the matter, that he was an "Irish fortune-hunter;" that he cozened the Countess of Strathmore into a marriage with him, and thus became associated with Gibside; that he used this lady most diabolically in order to get her estate; that he died in the King's Bench Prison, London, on January 16th, 1810, and that RICHARDSON says of him: "BOWES was a compound of baseness and hypocrisy; his acts (even in prison) were of the blackest die."

'Tis not for us to rake up from the past
The mouldering page of ignominious deeds,
Nor add anathema to the curses vast
Heaped on the heart that knew such demon needs.
Enough, the breast he bled no longer bleeds;
The lives he blasted feel no more the blight;
But yet, howe'er superior wisdom pleads,
The wrong *will* stand between us and the light,
Demanding audience first of all these wonders bright.

But hush! no more. As fleet as Derwent flows
Around the hills whose base her waters lave,
The tide that bore the barque of STONEY BOWES,
Bears ours as swiftly onward to the grave.
And we must learn the war-song of the brave,
And not the dirge of shattered lives self-wrecked,
If we would consecrate our powers to save
Our after-memory from the world's neglect,
Or give to future years the toil-fruit they expect.

And so, engaging Gibside, we shall sheen,
Not what thy fortunes were, but what thou art,
Of all this wealth of charms the sylvan queen,
Bright in the picture gallery of the heart.
One more absorbing gaze and we depart:
This column based in wood-depths, and on high
With sculptured figure crowned, may well divert
From bootless pages man's adoring eye
To those that, breathing, burn with love of liberty.

Forever pointing skyward, there it stands,
Indicative of nature's boons the best;
A mute reminder of the hearts and hands
That bled to give us more than they possess'd.
And speaking to the passion in the breast
Which God implanted to preserve us men,
That lone cloud-cleaving column shall attest
To years untried, and change not yet in ken,
That *one* high heart, at least, enriched this leafy glen.

O! God-created, *God-like* liberty!*

Her glorious worth what language may attest?

Nay! how sublimely great her votaries be,
Shall ne'er be fitly symbolled or expressed
And see, who loves her most and serves her best
Has reared their homes who delve his busy mine,†
Where, gazing stream-ward in their hours of rest,
That claims the kindling view in cloud and shine,
And bids them guard the right blood-purchased and divine.

For it is theirs, however mean their toil,
The priceless, God-given guerdon to defend:
And, O, were they like him for whom they toil!—
Truth's sturdy champion, Freedom's chosen friend
Whom force of tyrant factions failed to bend!—
O, were their hearts aflame with half the zeal
With which he toiled and taught, and strove to mend
The blur and blight, how swiftly would they heal
The thousand ills that eat into their lowly weal!

* This is a Doric Column, erected by GEORGE BOWES, father of the unhappy Countess of Strathmore. Its height is 140 feet, and it is surmounted by a statue of "British Liberty," and was erected in commemoration of that gentleman's success at an election.

† This mine, the property of JOSEPH COWEN, Esq., of Stella Hall, and late M.P. for Newcastle, is on the north side of the river, and nearly opposite the Monument. The miners live in a row verging the Newcastle Turnpike, and from their doors and windows they behold the Column rising from the depths of the vale and overtopping the woods.

For life's unfurrow'd miles the humblest brain
One grain of good, at least, may contribute,
Which, though it may not yield a blossom'd plain,
Will, here and there, sure flourish into fruit.
In Freedom's cause 'tis well to be devout,
For what a stretch of moral waste to weed!
And man must bid the mental blossoms shoot,
Whate'er his outer want, or inner need,
If he would break his gyves and climb to noble deed.

'Tis not in accidental power or place
Or titled name, or circumstantial state,
To scatter partial blessing on our race:
The meanest man is master of his fate,
And no earth-power can sink or elevate,
But that with which the inner life is stirr'd—
The ideal man that's with us soon and late:
And if his soul with higher things accord,
The humblest servant may be greater than his lord.

But farther scenes, and yet unscanned, await,
And we must yield to Beauty as she woos,
And cull the joys of this sublime estate
As home-material for the silent muse.
Again the road divides a thousand hues
Again the bordering woods, aroma'd, fill
With blending balms the chalice of the dews;
Charm laughs on charm, and hill sweet smiles on hill,
Till Beauty bids us pause at old Winlton Mill.*

And here the antique straggling hamlet sits
As musing on its loneliness. Around,
Save when a fluttering wood-bird o'er it flits,
All things are wrapt in dreaminess profound.
The well-worn mill has ceased its wonted sound,
And toil gives place to most unwelcome rest;
Old Enterprise has run his keel aground,
And thus deprived of all its ancient zest,
The languid village mourns the life it once possessed.

Winlton Mill is an old-fashioned romantic little village, sitting immediately on the verge of the Derwent, about two-and-a-half miles below Gibside, and about half-a-mile above Swalwell Station. As you gaze on it from the opposite bank it presents a most picturesque appearance, and gives one the impression that everything about it is a century or two behind hand. Over the hill from it, is Winlton Village, which owes its rise to Sir AMBROSE CRAWLEY, who started ironworks there in 1691. The Mill, itself, used to be very busy, but within these recent years has been doing very little.

But yet 'tis passing lovely to behold
The red roofs gleam above the white-washed walls,
Whence, rich with reminiscences of old,
The eye may drink delight where'er it falls.
And though no gothic domes, nor lordly halls
Absorb the pilgrim who may wander here,
The spell of its rusticity enthral
With joy more hallow'd and more sweetly dear,
Than ought that centres round our citadels austere.

Thus lost amid the best of earth-delights
We push, enraptured, onward to the goal
Of our engaging rambles, while the night's
Fume-veil is wreathing gold-gilt clouds that roll
Around the blaze of sunset, like a soul
Blending a thousand heart-hues black and bright:
But ere we quit the vale from which we've stole
So much endearing joy, and ere the sight
Is baffled with the gloom, behold on left and right!

There lovely Axwell, isolation-blest,
And park-commanding, greets the kindling view;
And up the hills with bloom and verdure dressed,
Behold green-girdled Whickham skirt the blue;
And here, the smithy fires of Swalwell Spew
There fume in sable columns, curling o'er
Her zigzag lanes and dingy. But adieu!
Our goal is gained: We part upon the shore,
Where SHIELD* was wont to sing, where BLYTHE HURST†
learned his lore.

I would that you had had a better guide
In these your Derwent rambles, than the bard
Who, at the most, can only say he's *tried*
To fill the lovely journey with reward.
But as it is, since we have thus conferred
On themes so passing grand, and rolled the sight
O'er such a wealth of beauty, 'twill be hard
For busy life to banish all the bright
Of Derwent from your heart. Good night! my friend, good
night!

* The author of a Ballad Opera called "Rosina," and, if tradition speaks truly, the composer of the "Keel Row." But whether this is correct or not, I would not like to say, for some argue that the air is Scotch. He died at Whickham.

† The late Rev. BLYTHE HURST served his time as a blacksmith here. His custom was—so I have learned from an old gentleman who worked with him when a boy—to chalk his lessons for the day on the iron plate above his smithy fire, so that he might get on with the double task of shaping iron and learning Greek at the same time.

Oh! I have loved thee, Valley of wild flowers,
And with a love that time may fail to chill!
"The Choral Muses and the Rosy Hours"*
Await on those who wander by the rill,
And these shall be my bright companions still.
Yes! I will love thee! For the dear "gone by"
Beheld my sire his span of being fill
And sink unto thy bosom: there, too, lie
And mingle with thy dust the hearts for which I sigh.

Yes! I will love thee! Yonder mouldering now
In one lone tomb, and by their mouldering sire,
Are they who met me with the beaming brow,
The soft young eyes that breathed a hallow'd fire;
And these shall live till life's last rays expire
In memory's golden cabinet! these are chains
The soul may hug for ever and not tire
Of her sweet bondage! Vale of teeming plains!
My life's best love is thine for what thy dust contains!

Oh! ye departed! o'er whose pillow'd head
The storms may howl in menace or refrain,
But dare not mar your consecrated bed,
Nor break the stillness of your calm domain!
How do I yearn to greet you once again,
To strain you to my bosom as of yore,
Ere that deep placid sleep came o'er the brain
Which shall not brook an interruption more!
But ye are gone, ye dead, and earth will not restore!

Nor do I murmur at this hard decree,
For it was well that you should go to rest;
Nor would I bring you back again to me,
For broken is the galling yoke that pressed
Its iron through the soul, and you are blessed,
Beyond the touch of sorrow's melting throe,
And all the pain that frets the goaded breast!
For what has life's delirious span to show
But ill begetting ill, and woe beclouding woe?

Then let me toil my round of life alone,
Nor weakly fear the world's inhuman war,
Till one kind hour shall call me to mine own,
And lay me down where my beloved ones are.
Though life be dark 'tis not without a star
Whose kindly radiance lights us to the goal
Where minds immortal feel no discords jar,
Where light, and life, and love pervade the whole,
And human ills no more rend soul apart from soul!



MINOR POEMS.

“All are architects of Fate
Working in these walls of Time,
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

“Nothing useless is, or low ;
Each thing in its place is best ;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.”

H. W. LONGFELLOW

Drifting Away.

Drifting away like the weeds on a river

Borne in the whirl of its maddening play,

Soon to be lost in the mighty forever,

Mortals are passively drifting away.

Heirs of humanity, vexed by insanity,

Children of vanity, gloomy or gay,

Strong or dispirited, as they have merited

Natures inherited, drifting away.

Drifting away, ever drifting away,

Mortals are passively drifting away.

Drifting away like the ships to the ocean,

Bound for a distant and shadowy bay,

Weary of life and its ceaseless commotion,

Men in their glory are drifting away.

Over the shifting sand, farther from port and land,

Into the ocean's grand, billowy sway ;

But ere the water's crossed, O, how their barque is tossed !

What if their chart is lost ?—drifting away !

Drifting away, ever drifting away,

Men in their glory are drifting away !

Drifting away from the truths they held dearest,
Lost in the gloom, unrelieved by a ray,
And shorn of the hope which to them was the clearest,
Mystery questioners, drifting away.
Doubt and its sable train, brooding o'er heart and brain,
Wake the consuming pain nought can allay,
And while the spirit lies writhing in agonies,
Blood-weeping nature sighs—"Drifting away!"
Drifting away, ever drifting away,
Mystery questioners, drifting away!

Drifting away from the shrines of devotion
Where, with rapt hearts, they assembled to pray,
No more to be thrilled with a holy emotion,
Baffled and bleeding, they're drifting away!
Where are the joys they knew! Where the blessed moments
few?
Backward they turn the view, late in life's day,
And on the travelled plain see the high pleasures slain,
Ne'er to be theirs again!—drifting away!
Drifting away, ever drifting away,
Baffled and bleeding, they're drifting away!

Drifting away from the high and the holy,
 Down to the low, the illicit, and gay,
 Borne on the currents of passion and folly,
 Pleasure's light votaries, drifting away.
 Fast fly their erring feet round where the vices meet,
 And where the sirens sweet sing to betray :
 But on the fatal isle, how shall they rue the guile,
 Curse the seductive smile !—drifting away !
 Drifting away, ever drifting away,
 Pleasure's light votaries, drifting away !

O, Father, whose fiat creation extended,
 And breathed into being inanimate clay,
 By the arm of Thy might be our weakness defended,
 Preserve us in mercy from drifting away !
 Ere the fell dart is cast into the heart at last,
 And the deep smart is fast-centred for aye,
 Spread Thy safe-sheltering wing over our suffering,
 And to Thy bosom bring all that would stray !
 Drifting away, ever drifting away,
 Preserve us in mercy from drifting away !

The Old Man's Prayer.

Deep in a wild and ferny-floor'd arcade,
One dreamy hour I hid myself away,
And, lost where light on vernal beauty played,
Gave unto nature one delightful day.
An unbreathed burthen on my spirit lay,
For I had trod the mazy round of doubt—
That round of smoking hearts and spectres grey—
And reasoned in how hard to reason out !
But even then despite the inner smart,
That green glen glassed its beauty in my heart.

How sweet to wander the aroma'd wood !
What bliss to linger where the ringdoves hide !
To wade the wild green depths of solitude,
With song to glad and beauty's glow to guide !
Thus, while the woodlarks sung and soft winds sighed,
I mused and urged my verdure-mantled way :
And heaven was in that woodland wild and wide :
O, I was glad ! the blossom'd glen was gay :
When rose again that all-deforming doubt,
And rudely dashed the shimmering glory out !

O, then and there a night fell on my heart ;
A heart-blight fell on aspirations high :
And stabb'd again, as with a poisoned dart,
The damning thought that life is mockery !
But now, a snow-tressed sage was standing by,
Who, with the wisdom native to his years,
Broke up the field of my philosophy,
And with a voice that wins while it endears,
Bade me in candid confidence disclose
These bosom-burning questions as they rose :—

Why am I born ? I did not wish to be :
My life demands the thanks I cannot pay :
Filled as it is with pain and misery
How gladly one might cast the boon away !
But I *am* born—and born to praise and pray :
To praise the hand that woke me to my woe !
To pray that it may hold me in the way
That leads not to its arbitrary blow !
“Give ! give !” the overwhelming passions cry ;
Who framed them thunders : “Give not, or you die !”

The old man raised his eyes and smiled,
Then stroked a snowy curl,
And said : " I trod that path my child
And found it ' burning merl ! ' "
These are not questions for the head,
Nor for the schoolman's art :
The secrets slumber with the dead
That trouble thy young heart.

'Tis madness pure in you or I,
As other years will show,
To search in ceaseless agony
For that we'll never know.
Believe not man was born in vain,
And mark you this, my boy,
There's more true schooling in his pain,
Than good in all his joy.

Seek not to know, but learn to trust,
And surely thou shalt prove
That He who called thee from the dust
Is worthy of thy love.
This said, he laid his tresses bare
And kneeling on the sod,
Low offered this remembered prayer
With fervent lips to God :

O, Thou beyond conception good,
 Beyond all wisdom wise,
The Framer of my finitude,
 The Builder of the skies !
With Thee, as with a cloud, Great Mind,
 My life is wrapt around ;
Go where I may, whate'er I find,
 My God is always found !

Though all the blazing worlds of space
 Revolve at Thy command,
Thy love has made my dwelling place
 The hollow of Thy hand.
Where'er I am, whate'er I be,
 Howe'er I walk astray,
Thy mercy still environs me
 With good from day to day.

Though all unworthy I have been,
 And all too blind to know,
Thy love in all my weal is seen
 Thy wisdom in my woe.
The darkest clouds that hue my day
 Are lined with golden good,
And nought the grateful soul can say
 Can laud Thee as it should.

How oft have I ignored Thy grace,
Or spurned the blessing given,
Or heart-rebellious turned my face
Impertinent to heaven !
Though pleasant paths and pastures green
Thy hand for me designed,
My cold and fitful worship's been
As moody as the mind !

How long, my God ! how long ! how long !
Shall wasting weakness reign,
And bind the heaven-aspiring strong
With such a fleshly chain ?
O, break the thrall of selfish sense,
Thou mystic One in Three,
And bind with Thy Omnipotence
My sliding soul to Thee !

The thousand things the thoughts confess
The world shall never hear,
The soul, assured, may pour and press
Into her Father's ear.
For, O, the ills of mortal state,
The fountains whence they flow,
The ocean-depths of love and hate,
My God can only know.

Hence from the deeps of dark distress—

The guilty's sure abode !

The soul cries out : Confess ! confess !

But only unto God !

And so however huge my pride,

However vile I be,

Thou good All-wise, I would not hide

One bosom-stain from Thee !

Nay ! ere the guilty deed's forgot

That wrings the riven heart,

I lay my finger on the spot

That needs Thy healing art !

Assured, though the as guilty's taunt

Would aggravate the blow,

That Thou wilt gratify my want,

And medicate my woe.

O ! give me, Giver of my good,

And Pillar of my hope,

The strength by which may be subdued

The ills with which I cope :

The centred will that lays the strife

Of passion's lava tide ;

The heart that still aromas life

The more, the more 'tis tried !

And lead me on where I may find
The wisdom long forgot,
That breathes the heaven of a mind
Contented with its lot !
The book-born pride, the damning doubt,
That blur whate'er they scan,
Cast out, Almighty God, cast out,
Ere they absorb the man !

Take not away the rich man's store,
But teach his heart to feel
That all the 'wants that pinch the poor
Are woes that he can heal.
Improve the truth's triumphant speed
To universal ken,
And pass not by one human need !—
Amen ! My God ! Amen ! ”

The old man rose, his eyes were wet,
But God was beaming there,
And warmed his throbbing brow with sweat
And sheened his snowy hair !
The glory and the glow came back
To all I gazed upon,
For, lo, the ghastly doubt and black,
The damning doubt was gone !

And gazing through the drifted years
 With all their change and care,
I see to-night that old man's tears,
 I hear that old man's prayer.
And ever since the memoried day
 I met him in the glen,
In all my woe I've strived to say—
 Amen! My God! Amen!



Never say Die.

Never say die, though the worst may betide thee,
Nor bow down thy soul to the vulgar and mean ;
The future unfoldeth a beacon to guide thee
Through all the dark ways of this turbulent scene.
Obscure for a time it may flicker uncertain,
Till weakness may tempt thee to shake off the clay ;
But watch and despair not, 'twill steal through the curtain,
And bless thee again with its life-giving ray.

Never say die, though the world may disdain thee,
The wisest, the greatest, have calumny borne ;
Nor let its base principles torture or chain thee,
For thou canst defy its abuse and its scorn.
Thy bosom may bleed in the sore tribulation,
As poniards of irony enter the soul ;
But short is the smart of the vain laceration,
Thy conscience, thy God, shall anoint and make whole.

Never say die, while a task is before thee,
But brave it, achieve it, and make thyself blest ;
For duty fulfilled is the noblest glory,
And labour accomplished the tranquildest rest.

Seek not for some soft flowery bed to recline on,
And bid thy companion go forth with his shield,
But buckle, I pray thee, that armour of thine on,
And bear off the laurels or die on the field.

Never say die, but bestir thee in earnest,
There lieth before thee a goal to be won,
And beaming around wheresoever thou turnest
Are smiles of affection to welcome thee on.
But what if thou pass through the world disregarded?
'Tis when we have done and our weapons laid by,
That all honest toil shall be justly rewarded—
O, never say die, brother, never say die !



Minnie: or a Blasted Life.

You would like to hear the story of the little maid I knew?
Well, I promise, though I cannot do the talk I used to do.
Feeble age and choking asthma make me careful how I speak,
Else my tale had dashed the colour from the most unfeeling
cheek.

MINNIE, lovely, hapless MINNIE! I can never breathe her
name,

But the feelings are awakened that the years could never tame.
How whole-hearted would she gambol when her day school
task was done!

And what soul was in her laughter when a holiday was won!

'Twas delightful to behold her in those love-remembered days,
Lighting up the dear old homestead with her kindly angel ways;
Flitting, as on downy pinion, o'er the meadows in the May,
As if chasing life's ecstatic spring in playfulness away.
Beaming eye and flaxen tresses, and a form of peerless grace,
And a heart whose depth of feeling mirror'd heaven in the face:
Pictures, painters love to pencil, breathing charms of poet's lore,
Gladdening wheresoe'er they linger, these were nature's gifts
to her.

And her mother loved her dearly and her father prized his child ;
And with patient care they taught her : " Gentle Jesus, meek
and mild ; "

And with Bible story formed her for the pathway of the good,
Till their little bright-eyed daughter ripened into womanhood.
But the path of life is tangled, and with hidden snares replete,
And the youthful heart and ardent hurries on the heedless feet ;
And we know not what the future, that, untrodden lies before
With its mingling shine and shadow, for our spirits has in store.

Nay ! we care not ; only give us the enjoyment of to-day,
And to-morrow, well, to-morrow, it may bring us what it may :
If the sky that spans the present only glad us with its beams,
None of age's heart-forebodings hue themselves in youthful
dreams.

This in passing. She grew older, she became exceeding fair,
She was lulled by adulation, was a suitor's lovely care.

We, the village boys that watched them wander down the
shady lane,

In our admiration deemed her—MINNIE—Flower of the Plain.

How we laughed when it was rumoured that her wedding day
was nigh !

How we'd shower the rice around her ! What big presents we
would buy !

How would boom our petty cannons ! How her native hazel
dells

Would re-echo with our voices when was pealed her wedding
bells !

O the prospect was delightful ! So we teased her every day ;
And we told her she was " fibbing," if she coyly answered
" nay ! "

For had not the village gossips told us when the day would be ?
We were certain she'd be married very soon—and so was she !

For had not her lover told her that her presence made his bliss ?
And that he could forfeit heaven for the heaven of her kiss ?
That he prized her fond affection more than monarch's gilded
throne ?

That he'd sooner die than hurt the heart he yearned to call his
own ?

That his passion was eternal ? that his soul was in his word ?
Had he not implored the promise that recording angels heard ?
Yes, he had ! and hapless MINNIE—O, ye pitying powers
above !—

Had bequeathed him all her being, *all* the wealth of *all* her
love !

But, ye ghosts of love-vows broken ! and ye depths of human
art !

He played lover ; he played traitor ; he played havoc with her
heart !

Plucked the tender beauty-blossom, wore it in his breast a day,
Cast it to the world's bleak bosom for the winds to bear away !
Worn of heart, and wronged, and blighted, where but now she
peerless shone,

In a sudden hour she vanished, in a moment she was gone !

Gone to tell the winds her sorrow ; gone in strangers' homes to
dwell ;

Gone, "but where?" The gossips shook their heads and
answered, "cannot tell !"

"Gone !" was all the doleful tidings that inquiry could exact,
Till a paragraph, black-margined, carried round the saddening
fact :

"Yestereve, in city alley, frozen to the flinty ground,
Where the snow had drifted deepest, lo ! the missing maid was
found !"

She had gone the round of folly that corrodes the prop of
pride,

And despairing, sought the alley where, unpitied, she had died.

Yes ! 'twas hers to tread the burning path of misery below,

And 'twas hers, at last, to fall beneath the burden of her woe.

To that tale of shame her mother a delirious answer gave,
And swift went down her hoary locks with sorrow to the grave ;
And day by day her father grew more wrapt in mental gloom,
And followed soon his aged mate to shelter in the tomb ;
And MINNIE sleeps in dreamless sleep—a sleep as soft as long—
Whose sunny life was blasted by a single moral wrong ;
And—but we shall not mention now the doer of the deed :
The heart is sure to bleed at last that makes another bleed !



The Smile that Beams at Home.

There lives a charm in all we see,
A spell in water's shimmering sheen ;
In every flower that decks the lea,
A presence and a power are seen.
But what were all the joys below
The azure of this ample dome,
Had human love not caused to glow
The smile that beams at home ?

In all the rounds of weary life
Here blooms an Eden for us all ;
A voice to cheer us in the strife,
An arm to lean on when we fall ;
An eye that breathes a changeless love,
A heart that always makes us room :
O, give to me where'er I rove,
The smile that beams at home !

When toil bears down the aching frame,
Or fretful care corrodes the breast ;
When fevers set the brain on flame,
And evening brings no hour of rest ;
What sun illumines the murky night ?
What cheering presence gilds the gloom,
And throws around its lavish light ?
The smile that beams at home !

When stern oppression's iron heel
 Would crush the life from out the heart,
Wrest from the lip the scanty meal,
 And nature faints beneath the smart;
What soothing power may heal the wound,
 Allay the bosom's rising foam,
And bid the deserts smile around?
 The smile that beams at home!

When they in whom we learned to trust
 In selfish coldness far remove,
And view with rancour and disgust
 The warmth of an eternal love;
What mortal charm may quell the throe
 And bid the dove-eyed halcyon come
To spread her pinion o'er our woe?
 The smile that beams at home!

When far, in climes unfriendly we,
 By fortune's freaks, are forced to fly,
Where all we meet, and hear, and see,
 Grates on the heart, the ear, and eye;
What light celestial shines afar
 To guide our feet where'er we roam--
A centred joy, a polar star?
 The smile that beams at home!

And when that holy smile is fled,
That soft, bright eye forever closed,
And laid within the quiet bed,
Where kindred hearts have long reposed :
Where is the light that passed away ?
See ! through the vistas of the tomb,
Still lingering on our darksome way
The smile that beams at home !



Our Quiet Hours.

Our quiet hours have power at their command
To lift the thick, black veil of mystery,
And lead us to the borders of that sea
Whose silent waters lave our time-leased land :
Where we behold our loved ones as they stand
Smiling and radiant on the farther shore,
Watching our weary tugging at the oar,
And waving to us with immortal hand.
And as we gaze and ponder, lo, a band
Of holy singers its wrapt music flings
Around us, till we seem to understand
The import of our being, and that things
Beyond the grave are not all vain imaginings.



The Children of the Street.

A dark night in cold December blew a tempest wild and loud,
As alone I hurried homeward through the city's surging crowd.
The gas-lights on the pavement flickered o'er the stony street
And the sloppy flags resounded with the urchins' dripping feet.
The cowering little creatures shivered in the bitter gale,
As they cried the evening papers and the wares they had for
sale ;
And the tears they could not stifle came in gushes to the eye,
As their voices fell unheeded on the ears of passers by.

Now, the rain and sleet fell mingled ; now, the wind was up
alone,
And rushed through the long, dark archways with a kind of
demon groan ;
Now, the face of sky was opaque ; now the sable storm-clouds
spread ;
Now, they emptied, unrelenting, all their vengeance on the
head !
Still those little ragged owners of the cold and shoeless feet,
Cowering, shivering, ghastly, dripping, cried their wares from
street to street :
O ! 'twas piteous to behold them in that bitter night and cold !
But they'd bought their evening quantum, and that quantum
must be sold !

There's a father in yon garret breathing stench of city slums,
Waiting for his squalid urchin, not to kiss him when he comes,
But to clutch the scanty earnings that have cost the child so
 dear,

Not to buy a bun for BENNY, but to guzzle them in beer !
So averred the voice of rumour ; so I'd heard some time ago ;
But I deemed that human nature would not, could not, stoop
 so low,

Till that night in cold December, which I still remember well,
Gave my heart a thrill of horror, and this saddening tale to tell :

Passing o'er the stony pavement to the margin of the flags,
Huddled in a filthy corner I espied a bunch of rags.
As I stooped to scan it closer, lo, the moon exposed a curl,
Toying with the open forehead of a hapless little girl !
There she lay, benumbed and frozen, hidden from the gas-light's
 glare,
With her dainty limbs half covered, dirty face, and matted
 hair.
On her brow were sorrow-traces, and her eye had lost its beam,
And it seemed as though she startled in a wild and fevered
 dream.

With a kindly word I woke her, for I could not see her lie
In that cold and filthy corner when the storm was raging high ;
For I knew before the morning could have warmed her flinty
bed,

Her young heart had been hushed into the deep silence of the
dead.

So with kindly word I woke her ; but she scared me with her
scream,

For she took me for the subject of her wild and fevered dream.

“O, my father, do not beat me !” was the little maiden’s cry ;

“I have not sold all my matches, ’cause the people wouldn’t
buy !

“Till my limbs were worn and weary ; till I shook from head
to feet ;

Till my eyes were blind with sleet and rain I ran from street
to street.

But the people would not buy them, and I thought there’d be
no harm,

If I crept into a corner to take shelter from the storm.

I am weary, I am weary, and my heart is like to break—

O, my father, do not beat me !” Here she made my spirit ache :

For she threw a glance around her as she raised her tiny head,

And a burst of anguish stifled what she would have farther
said.

But between the sobs I gathered that her name was MARY
ANN;

That her father was a drunken, idle, scapegrace of a man ;

That her mother was not worthy of that dearest mortal name,

And that both their lives were spotted with the burning brand
of shame.

That her dwelling was a garret, that no comfort lingered there ;

That delirious blows and curses often formed her cruel fare ;

That she shook with fear foreboding at the lovely name of
home,

“ ’Cause she hadn’t sold her matches ” ere the “ closing time ”
had come !

And that she would rather venture on the frozen flags to lie,

Than to meet the wicked menace of a cruel father’s eye !

I essayed to soothe her sorrow, and to make her lot more
bright,

Gave her what would buy her welcome to the garret for the
night.

Then I saw her to a passage, through which silently she stole,

And I turned around and left her with an arrow in my soul :

Ah ! methought, if one could picture, half the many woes they
meet,

The cold public would be kinder to the children of the street !

Life as it is.

"Twas eve, the soft winds sighed among the corn
Whose yellow ripeness shook its bending stem;
And LUNA laughed down on the valley-burn,
Till every wavelet sparkled like a gem :
And all was bliss and beauty : earth and sky
Spread their supernal grandeur on the eye.

And as I gazed upon that lavish bliss,
This burning thought came throbbing o'er the brain :
Alas ! that such an Eden-world as this,
Should nurse so much of self and yearning vain !
O, had his heart been pure as this bright even,
Then man had been as God, and earth as heaven !

Then, in my heart, I wept and bled with those
Whose names are spurn'd as common, vulgar, rude ;
Who seal their lips to hide a thousand woes ;
Whose cheeks are furrow'd down with tears of blood ;
Whose dearest hopes are sapp'd for other's lust ;
Whose life is death, whose dwelling is the dust.

There, pines the orphan, squalid and unfed ;
Here, writhes the baffled father in despair ;
There, widowed virtue, wails above her dead
With milkless bosom and dishevelled hair ;
And, lo, "my lord," half lost in pillow'd ease,
Sits like a laughing imp and scoffs at these !

But this is fancy ? No ! thou sophist, no !
'Tis very life—things as they really are.
Hast thou not felt the heart consuming throe,
That gives existence all the pangs of war ?
Then bless thy dullness, or propitious birth,
For thine is not the fate of humble worth !



Work !

In days remote, when hoary eld
First knew primeval man,
Firm in the path of duty held,
His fateful life began.
And ere his first day's sun was set,
Did heaven the mandate give :
"Prepare to live by toil and sweat—
By labour must thou live."

And pealing through the ages still,
More loudly than before,
That fiat floats from hill to hill,
And sounds from shore to shore.
Nay ! in the inmost life of man,
Is heard the stern decree :
So we must up and till the lawn !
Or toil, or cease to be !

But louder, lo ! the voice is heard,
And sterner still, but kind :
Till not alone the spreading sward ;
Till, too, the waste of mind !
Deep in thy bosom's strange recess
Incessant, bravely toil,
That harvests of high blessedness,
May crown that finer soil.

Work that thy conscious soul may know
The mortal cost of crime ;
Nor let one seed of darkness grow
In such a sacred clime !
Out with the blackening germs of death,
That rankle at the core !
The thought unkind, the passion blind,
And all that still impedes the mind ;
For soul was made to soar !

And work to make their sufferings less,
Whose stifled cry is pain ;
Whose lives are gall and bitterness,
Whose spirits drag the chain.
One sabre-flash of word or deed
Has changed a nation's thought,
A million groaning captives freed
To breathe as mortals ought.

Then work ! Not with thy hands alone,
But with thy voice and pen,
Help, help to pull the systems down
That dwarf ill-fated men !
The shameful things ! O ! who shall dare
To carol lightly by,
What time's sure vengeance shall not spare,
And nature brands a lie !

Work ! But O ! let no tyrant's hand
Degrade thee to a tool ;
For thou art greater than his land,
And *he* may be a fool.
'Tis thine, as his, the tools to wield ;
And be they what they may,
Go out into the labour field,
And clear some weeds away.

'Tis small, indeed, that man can do,
Yet on the stubborn soil,
The delvers yet unborn may view.
The traces of thy toil ;
And thus the imprints of thy feet,
May cheer them on their way,
When they would faint beneath the heat
And burden of the day.

Work ! Be thy hopes and life-goal high,
Thy labour freely given,
And toil as ever in the eye
Of all-beholding heaven.
Then whatsoe'er thy fate may be,
Come poverty or pain,
'Twill at the last be said of thee—
He has not lived in vain !

The Harvester.

Ere the world has discarded the spell of repose
Or the mist of the morn is away,
To the corn-laden acres the harvester goes,
And lays hold of the task of the day.
With a tool for his hand, with a heart for his breast,
And with strength for his sinewy arm,
He is high over monarchs contented and blest,
As he gathers the wealth of the farm.

And the song is upborne,
As he rustles the corn—
The cold winter is near us again ;
But the world shall be fed
With its earth-given bread,
For the harvester garners the grain.

The loud laugh of the lass, and the jest of the swain,
And the reaper's glad, musical rounds,
And the snort of the horse, and the creak of the wain,
Have a soul in their magical sounds,
That unfolds the deep lore of the creed he believes,
Which is—Man, make the best of thy now !
And he rolls up his sleeves, and he binds up the sheaves,
Till the sweat trickles down from his brow.

And the song is upborne
As he rustles the corn—

The cold winter is near us again ;
But the world shall be fed
With its earth-given bread,
For the harvester garners the grain.

In the hue of the leaf as it wheels in the wind,
In the meadow's swift-lessening glow,
In the woodland the autumn has yellow'd and thinned,
He beholds the approach of the snow ;
And he knows the brief date of the labour he speeds,
And lets no flagging effort retard ;
But he reaps, and he rakes, and he loads, and he leads,
Till the last sheaf is stacked in the yard.

And the song is upborne
As he rustles the corn—
The cold winter is near us again ;
But the world shall be fed
With its earth-given bread,
For the harvester garners the grain.

Then the glow of his heart when the harvest is done,
And the thrasher's dissonance is high !
And the unruffled depth of the rest he has won,
When the storm is abroad in the sky !
Let the sour heavens scowl, let the bitter winds howl,
They can give him but little concern !

He has calm in his soul, he has milk in his bowl,

He has plenty of corn in the barn !

And the song is upborne

As he rustles the corn—

The cold winter is with us again ;

But the world shall be fed

With its earth-given bread,

For the harvester's garnered the grain.



The Old Friends and the New.

(WRITTEN DURING A VISIT TO BLACKHALL MILL.)

Here, gazing o'er the veering stream,
Whose banks I sought in other days,
To ponder o'er some darling theme,
Or spin my infant lays,
A vision of the vanished past
Sweet dawns upon the view,
And with its spell upon me cast,
I sit me down to muse at last,
Of old friends and the new

This clump of trees, that field of corn,
The emerald of yon wood-crowned hill,
From which I've watched the dewy morn
Her balmy censer fill ;
The shimmer of this river's sheen,
Yon cottage-shading yew,
All point me back to what I've been,
To what I've felt and what I've seen
With old friends and the new.

This old mill-dam, that ruined forge,
Yon little ancient white-washed farm,
Have all a silent tale to urge
That's not without its charm.

This gust of wind that moans and sighs
The moonlit valley through,
As viewless o'er the hills it hies
Awakens cherished memories
Of old friends and the new.

This humble shrine that skirts my way,
This deep and river-margined grove,
Where happy swains and maidens stray
To learn the lore of love ;
These woods that wave around Black Hall,
That bass-voiced owl's "hoo hoo,"
This wheeling leaf's fantastic fall,
Speak volumes to my heart of all
The old friends and the new.

From all I see the enraptured sight
Imbibes the pleasures that abide,
And thrills me with a joy as bright
As this pellucid tide ;
While sombre shadows, here and there,
Like cloud-spots on the blue,
Are blending with the visions fair,
Recalling all I've known of care
With old friends and the new.

For what is man? and what his years?

Fast-fleeting things that will not stay,
As much inured to smiles and tears

As birds to night and day!
And sable hours of sorrow yet

My spirit may imbue;
But never till life's sun is set
Shall this warm, throbbing heart forget
The old friends and the new.



Baby Mine.

'Tis a tiny piece of being only budding into bloom,
Flinging all the soul of heaven o'er the sombre and the gloom ;
And it sweetens all the bitter, and it bids the shadow shine,
Does this little cosy, rosy, posy, cherub bud of mine.

From the azure peep of morning till the sable streak of night,
'Tis imbued with tears and laughter, baby cares and young
delight ;
Nursing doll upon the carpet, thrilling with affection fine,
Is this kissing, cooing, wooing, rueing baby bud of mine.

Now, 'tis all endearing prattle ; now, 'tis all engaging glee ;
Now, it comes for healing kisses, first to ma and then to me ;
Now, 'tis lost in strange amazement ; now, 'tis beaming as
divine,
Is this fairy, funny, sunny, honey, human bud of mine.

'Tis a thing with eyes of azure, with a head of soft locks curled ;
'Tis a little bright enigma laughing o'er my wonder-world ;
O ! what mortal wealth could buy thee, or to other hands
consign ?
Not a thousand million billion trillion, little baby mine !

Your ain bit fireside.

When the stormy winds o' winter loud an' keen around ye
blaw,

An' the flowerless earth is buried 'neath its fleecy coat o' snaw,
How the heart leaps up a' cheery wi' a thrill o' honest pride,
As you crook your frozen hunkers at your ain bit fireside.

Or when haggard, worn, an' weary wi' a lang an' toilsome day,
An' the spirit sighs for something its wild burning to allay;
The best, the surest, sweetest balm that ever poor man tried,
Is found within the precincts of his ain bit fireside.

Or when wandering lone an' exiled frae the scenes ye loved to
tread,

Through a world as cold an' selfish as the clay that wraps the
dead;

How the bosom's inly bleedings and the tossing o' the tide
Fill the heart with earnest yearnings for your ain bit fireside!

Or to watch the wild commotion of the world's chaotic war,
Or to brave the hours of labour where the meaner vices are;
Where the vulgar hurl their curses and the proud in heart
deride—

Is to wake the love that dies not for your ain bit fireside.

O ! there's grandeur on the mountain, an' there's beauty on the
sea ;

There's a spell in every fountain, an' a charm on ilka lea ;

But there 'ne'er was such a hallow'd charm in a' the world
beside,

As the quiet, cosy corner of your ain bit fireside.

For whatever be your fortune, or however keen your pain,

A loving heart is beating there in concert wi' your ain ;

An' the prattle o' the bairnie as it greets your welcome stride,

Is the soul reviving music of your ain bit fireside.



The Old Churchyard.

The days of long-ebb'd years come back,
The voices hushed and gone
That threw their music o'er my track
Awake their wonted tone ;
The mead, the lane unhymn'd by lyre,
The gush of young delight ;
The fun that fired the limbs it tired,
Are all with me to-night ;
But memory strikes a latent chord
That points me to the old churchyard.

For there, in soothing silence hushed,
The dreamless hearts repose,
Whence holy tides of feeling gushed
To balm my infant woes ;
And as the rising memories crowd
The breast's aroma'd urn,
I feel as I could weep aloud,
And cry for their return !
While deeply thrills the potent chord,
That points me to the old churchyard.

Though eyes as lucid in their hue
 Have beamed athwart my way,
As brightly dark, as sweetly blue
 As ought of visual ray ;
Though hearts as genial in their glow
 Have throbbed to answer mine ;
The eyes that gemmed the long ago,
 The hearts for which I pine,
Are those that wake the pensive chord
That points me to the old churchyard.

And oft as old time dreams return,
 Or fainting nature falls,
Or memory bids the bosom burn,
 Or sorrow plumes her palls,
Reflection walks with brooding eye,
 Around the sacred heap,
Where those in soothing silence lie
 With whom I yearn to sleep.
For toilsome life what meet reward
To slumber in that old churchyard !

One by One.

Heart-hushed I gaze through drifted days
To childhood's fairy scene,
When life expressed its simple ways
In gambols on the green ;
When laughter lit the meadow track,
And echo caught the strain,
And threw the voice of gladness back
Full on the ear again.
The hope that buoy'd the spirit then,
Was bright as seraph's heaven,
And warm as that rare rapture when
The first love-kiss is given.
Thus, hope-equipped, we wander forth,
To find, as years roll on,
The chords that bind the heart to earth,
Are severed one by one.

The woodlands o'er whose covert miles
My ardent boyhood strayed,
Prolong their variegated smiles
And woo me to their shade ;
The spreading lea, the purling burn,
Retain their native spell,
Nor shall I ever coldly turn
From what I've loved so well.

But what was once a dream to me,
Unspotted by a care,
Was hued by life's reality
With something of despair,
When his dear sight who blessed my birth,
No longer round me shone—
The chords that bind the heart to earth,
Are severed one by one !

And now the spring's young smile is nigh
To light the leafy bowers,
To mingle balm with melody
And fill the world with flowers ;
And as long-absent lovers meet
With joy-born smile and tear,
My bounding heart goes forth to greet
This virgin of the year :
But can she fully sate the mind
With all her balm and bloom,
When dolesome yesterday consigned
My sister to the tomb ?
Another gloom is on the hearth !
Another life-light gone !
The chords that bind the heart to earth,
Are severed one by one !

O, kind as mother nature is,
 To me the years have shown,
A wildly restless heart is his
 Who lives for her alone.
The mocking of the palls and shrouds !
 The taunting of the sigh !
If, through the clefts of sorrow-clouds,
 We scan no kinder sky !
The woes by which the heart is bled,
 Whatever else they mean,
Attest, at least, we daily tread
 The verge of the unseen ;
And that our lives were little worth,
 If bounded by this zone,
Since chords that bind the heart to earth,
 Are severed one by one.



In Memoriam.

“And sitting down they watched Him there.”—St. MATTHEW xxvii., 36.

The late JOHN W. MUIR preached from these words at Blackhall Mill, just before his sailing to Africa, where he died. I remember they afforded him his evening subject; the last sermon delivered by him I had the pleasure of hearing.

“And sitting down they watched Him there:”

Who taught us from these words is clay!

But, like a vision pure and fair,

Whose beauty will not pass away,

They breathe an ever-deepening tone,

And echo back a voice that's gone.

In beauty lay the Derwent Vale,

For autumn deck'd the teeming sward,

And borne upon the balmy gale,

The sound of Sabbath bells was heard,

As trembled through a modest fane,

The words we shall not hear again.

A “Voice, a Presence, and a Power,”

That holy men were wont to feel,

Engaged that consecrated hour

In work that aimed at others' weal—

A mission high, supernal, rare—

“And sitting down they watched Him there.”

And had they known how briefly near
The hushing of the heart was he,
How had their bosoms bled to hear
The grandeur of his ministry !
But with a cool and reckless air,
“And sitting down they watched Him there !”

“And sitting down they watched Him there,”
Their depth of burning guilt portray,
Who hung Messiah's form in air
Till ebb'd His mighty life away.
While rending skies and yawning earth,
Beheld the sainted dead come forth.

“And sitting down they watched Him there,”
With stifled hearts and centred gaze,
And heard his fervent words of prayer,
His soul exult in bursts of praise ;
Till warming to the theme he loved,
Like one rapt heart his audience moved.

But words will not ring out for aye,
And darkness wrapt the holy shrine ;
And old men with their locks of grey,
And maidens with a mien benign,
In silence hastened from the spot,
Alike forgetting and forgot.

And far away in dusky lands, remote
From all the charms he held supremely dear,
The preacher woke the high and holy thought
That draws the sting of superstitious fear,
By the same tale he told so lately here,
In savage natures, who were wont to kneel
To those frail gods that human hands may rear,
Or scatter to the winds with common zeal,
But which to mortal hearts are torturers too real.

And toiling there, in sable men's abodes,
He dealt out mercy with a liberal hand ;
Inciting to a massacre of gods,
But never breaking love's supreme command.
And while reverting to his native land
To cull examples for his dearest theme,
A feeling far too deep to understand,
Would cause the half unconscious tear to stream,
And call his absent friends around as in a dream.

“ And sitting down they watched Him there,”

Those dwellers in yon mental night—

The Kaffir with his curly hair,

And motley crowds of black and white—

Inspire the heart, evoke the tear,

And fire the soul as he did here,

But all we love shall pass away,
And shadows cloud the brightest eyes ;
And mingling now with foreign clay,
The preacher's dust in silence lies :
Alas ! his words are heard no more,
In Derwent's Vale, on Afric's shore !

But still when autumn fills her horn,
As summer glories fade and die,
And bells salute the Sabbath morn,
With soul-enthraling melody
The hour recalls the season fair,
When sitting down we watched him there.

And should our hearts in silent anguish bleed,
Awakened thus to our untimely woe,
Then shall we follow whither he doth lead,
And drink a balm beyond the things below.
For human hearts must have somewhere to go,
Some comforter must soothe their little cares,
Some friendly arm that deals no needless blow,
Must share the burden that the wretched bears,
And weed from out the breast the thorn that frets and tears.

And whither can we go but unto Thee,
Physician of the broken heart, for rest,
When, like the billows of a boiling sea,
Afflictions roll across the weary breast ?
Our heads reclining on Thy gory vest,
May shelter when the roughest winds may blow,
As he whom Thou hast freed from toil and blest
With all the joys immortal spirits know,
Was wont to teach and do in this dark land below.



Till Summer Smiles Again.

The angry north's relentless blast
Sweeps through the leafless trees ;
The downy snowflakes, falling fast,
Upon my garments freeze ;
The robin chirps beside my door,
The swallow's crossed the main,
And sleeping is the lovely flower,
Till summer smiles again.

The hawthorn bears no ripening bud,
The brier no opening rose ;
In icy shackles lies the flood,
The lawn no verdure knows ;
The squirrel's ceased his gambols rare,
And quiet doth remain ;
And scanty is the cony's fare
Till summer smiles again.

The thrush has hushed the melody
That charmed the flowery grove ;
No linnet sings upon the tree,
Beside his feathered love ;
All nature wears a solemn hue,
Her beauties all are slain ;
But only to appear anew
When summer smiles again.

So, changing is the mortal dream
Of man's allotted years ;
Now bright with hope's celestial beam,
Now dim with sorrow's tears :
For, ah ! the Paradise is lost
Which he can ne'er attain
Till feet are bled, and miles are crossed,
And summer smiles again.



Victor Hugo.

He is gone the best and dearest
Of the mortals who entrance ;
Who was held the first and nearest
To the sunny heart of France !
And a life of genial light
Has been ushered into night,
That diffused in kindly guidance
For humanity's advance.

He is gone, and lo ! the nation
That maligned him and exiled,
Pours the tears of lamentation
O'er the ashes of her child !
Crying from her depth of grief—
“ Noble lives are all too brief ! ”
Lasting sorrow ! Love abiding !
’Twas the meed for which he toiled !

Closed the eyes of deep discerning !
Hushed the heart that knew no crime !
Stilled the lofty spirit's yearning
For the good that conquers time !
But his words of burning glow,
Still abiding here below,
Shall exalt and charm and cheer us
With their soul-inspiring chime.

He is gone, the brave and earnest—
Balmy rest await his shade !
“Dust thou art to dust returnest,”
Shall above us all be said,
As the feeble and the great,
Falling, share the common fate,
But how few, few deaths shall make the gap
The death of HUGO made !



Virtue's Triumph.

The moon, not yet full-orbed, is riding high,
A mounting glory, 'round which vapours grey
Are swiftly whirling their fantastic way,
And framing grotesque figures on the sky.
But now, her light was lost to mortal eye,
Obscured and hid behind a cloud-ridge black ;
But mounting upward in her glory-track,
She mildly brushed the vain obstruction by.
And so, methinks, though virtue often lie
Heart-crushed and bleeding 'neath a weight of wrong,
'Tis not because she seeks a place to die,
But that by suffering she may be made strong :
The bitter conflict first, and then the triumph-song !



“Home, Sweet Home.”

’Tis eve, the city seems but half astir,
Less frenzied rolls the stormy wave of strife ;
And, hark ! there comes to greet me at my door,
A strain of music like a breath of life :
Awoke, maybe, by one whose meed is alms,
But richly laden with prolific balms.

’Tis not that jumble of chaotic sounds
Whose drone and grind have made you flee the streets ;
But that which echo’s through the heart-profound,
And bids the quick pulse tingle while it beats ;
That dear to man and maid, where’er they roam,
The heart and hope awakening “home, sweet home.”

What though a wandering minstrel wakes the chord ?
What though he thus on public bounty calls ?
Ah ! who can tell what bosom-depths are stirred,
Where’er the beauty of its breathing falls ?
’Tis not confined to hall nor lordly dome,
This sweet and bosom-thrilling “home, sweet home.”

But stealing through the wretched's dismal room,
It breathes a soothing salutation there,
Imparts a glory-halo to the gloom,
And sweetens half the pestilential air ;
And woe, oblivious of her bleeding core,
Sweet-smiling hails the angel-visitor.

And down the allies dark and filthy slums,
Where vulgar vice and sham refinement horde,
With blessing rich that music-message comes,
And thrills again a long-forgotten chord ;
Inflames the heart with all its virgin glow,
And limns with vivid light the long ago.

Then borne on breeze's wing, the wandering strain,
Thrills potent through the exile's aching breast ;
While dying men forget the maddening pain,
And hear in *that* the welcome of the blest :
For what so dear to those who feel the foam
Of Jordan at their feet, as "home, sweet home?"

O ! chainless charm ! O ! beamless beauty, cast
Impalpable upon the empty air !
O ! wordless speech, aglow with meaning vast,
And opulent with intonation rare !
O fine ethereal honey-drops of soul
That flow so sweetly forth with liquid roll !

Are human lives, like thy harmonious flow,
By myriad harp-strings touched by subtle hand ?
Are all the loud shrill-wailing notes of woe,
But music chords too deep to understand ?
O, pleasing hope that coming years shall see
Them blend in universal harmony !



Mammon to his Votaries.

'Tis high honour to address you
Men of wisdom, men of might ;
Honour high, indeed, to bless you,
With the good for which you fight.
This proclaims how much I prize you :
Then attend what I aver,
While I hasten to apprise you
Of the thoughts that in me are.

Mark the stretch of my dominions !—
Petty lips in anger curled,
Offering *me their* sage opinions !—
Me, the monarch of the world !
Scoff at *my* superb provinces !
Deem *my* sceptre sordid clay !—
Men and monarchs, peers and princes
Pay their homage to my sway !

Let the pious puppets clamour,
The indigent storm and rage,
And descant in faulty grammar
On this truly Midas-age !
Gold is gold, and mortals love it :
Man or maid, whoever wins
Only just sufficient of it,
Hides a multitude of sins !

Tush ! a fig for all your graces,
All the love of gushing hearts,
All the glow of lovely faces,
All the worth of mental parts,
All the lofty flights of science,
Every thought's poetic flash,
If they fail to form alliance
With the necessary cash !

Gather guineas, then, and store them,
For the world despises rags :
Even if an angel bore them
Men would scorn him from the flags.
Talents ! honours ! virtues ! graces !
Fleeting, unabiding things !
Feeling in their lofty places
Every frown a patron flings !

Who would woo them ? Who would prize them
Even though they peerless shone ?
Fie ! I hate them ! I despise them !
Gold's the good to dote upon !
Gold's the good, and if you'd gain it,
Give your trusty hearts to me :
You shall strain it, you shall drain it
From the dregs of misery !

Sonnet.

(SUGGESTED BY A VISIT TO BURNS' MAUSOLEUM, DUMFRIES, 1886.)

Capricious world ! The minstrel and his lute
Were branded by the creatures of his time ;
And now that his great heart beats out no rhyme,
And now that his love-eloquence is mute,
The gracious sons of most ungrateful sires,
Thick-crowding the asylum of the dead,
Would even rouse the dreamer from his bed,
And give him back his passions and his fires !
How ample is the palliative now—
“The light that lead astray was light from heaven !”
His vices are forgotten and forgiven,
And millions o'er his slumbers sadly bow !
O, Caledonia, was it not too hard,
To give so strange a fate to such a bard ?



Sonnet.

(WRITTEN AFTER A VISIT TO BURNS' MONUMENT, GLASGOW, IN 1886.)

For shame, great Glasgow ! tear the tribute down,
And give its fragments to their native clay ;
Or take its show of shabbiness away,
Nor let it thus cry fie upon the town ;
What ! this the full expression of thy pride
In nature's own, and Scotland's monarch bard ?
Nay ! he is worthy more of thy regard.
Imperious mistress of the busy Clyde !
'Twas meet to pillar SCOTT so proudly high ;
But, O, to pillar BURNS so meanly low !—
The minstrel of such glory and such woe,
The common scorn of every passer by !
O, build again, the pilgrim prays, and turns
Indignant from thy monument to BURNS.



New Year, 1886.

As the woes of the world on the wings of the past
From the land of the mortal are borne,
The unceasing life-shuttles day-weaving so fast,
Shall have soon woven in our last morn ;
And the hues of the woof, when the moments are spun,
Shall the tale to eternity bear,
How the shuttle was fed, and the weaving was done,
How we darkened with guilt, or gay-tinted with fun ;
And the wheat and the tare, and the sin and the snare,
And the tear and the prayer are eternally there,
While shuttles are feeding, and bosoms are bleeding,
And moments are speeding away with the year.

All the crimes of the hour when was broken the thread,
And the faults were wove into the web ;
All the hopes of the heart, as the labour-day sped,
To improve the poor residue left,
Are the marks that escape not the taskmaster's eye ;
Are the marks that remain as they were :
And the sheen of the truth and the glare of the lie,
Nay ! the unuttered thoughts are recorded on high !
And the wear and the tear, and the foul and the fair,
And the toil and the care are eternally there,
While shuttles are flying, and mortals are dying,
And moments are nighing the end of the year.

Thus the morrowless night is approaching apace,
And the heart throbs away with the suns ;
And the fast-fading glow of the mind-mirror'd face,
Is the tale how the life-current runs :
But the bosom, enriched with the spoils of the past,
Has a guest that no shadow may scare ;
For though sorrows and sins have been many and vast,
There's a hope that shall light up the gloom to the last,
And an energy rare, and a courage to dare,
That shall baffle despair, everlastingly there,
While shuttles are swinging, and glad bells are ringing,
And moments are winging away with the year.

Then a full-hearted "cheer" ! to the right, to the left !

For attend the life-loom as we may,
There is always a fault to disfigure the weft,
As we'll find at the close of the day.

For we negative nature's imperative yes,

Her imperative negative dare ;
And we faint and we fall on the pathway we press :
But the God that created shall pardon and bless,
For the burden we bear, and the weakness we wear,
Shall insure us a share of His comforting care.

Then hail the glad singing while shuttles are swinging,
And moments are bringing a happy new year.

Whence? Whither?

Gazing out upon the ocean from my pillow on the sand,
Dreaming, through a lovely summer noon I lay,
And beheld the laughing sailor wave his farewell to the land
He was leaving for some country far away.
Far athwart the world of waters flew the billow-braving JACK,
As rejoicing in his destiny to roam ;
While among the harbour noises was the cheerful "welcome
back !"
To the tars who'd reached the haven of their home.
And anon I fell aguessing at the constant "come-and-go,"
And the everlasting moaning of the main,
Till the deep evasive meaning of our destiny below,
Hued itself in sombre colours on the brain.
Whence, O whence? and whither, whither?
Ships of ocean, birds of ether,
Sleep we in one death together?
Come we from the self-same land?
Is our earth-life but a seeming?
Shall it know a brighter beaming?
Thus I lingered guessing, dreaming,
Pillowed on the sand.

Then I scanned the heaving bosom of the seething sea of time,
And, as on this world-encircling pool of blue,
I beheld the like embarkings for an unfamiliar clime,
And the like pathetic tokens of adieu ;
While above the moans of dying, and the breaking hearts of
kin,
Was the world's loud music-laughter borne about ;
For behold, a host as mighty flowing tides were drifting in,
As the host the ebbing tides were drifting out.
And again I fell aguessing at this constant "come-and-go,"
And I wondered with a wonder that was awe,
Till the daring fancy revelled in the glory and the glow,
Of the things no mortal vision ever saw.

Whence, O whence? and whither, whither?

Has the human soul a father?

Seems it not an orphan rather,

Lost in an enigma-land,

Hoping, doubting, cursing, blessing,

Sinning, soaring, noing, yessing?

Thus I lingered dreaming, guessing,

Pillowed on the sand.

Then a gift fell on my vision and I saw or seemed to see—

O, I would that I could cogently relate!

That the peopled world was but a great big noisy nursery,

Where ingenious baby prophets sit and prate;

Where the wisdom of the wisest is impenetrable haze,
But a blending of divinity and dust ;
Where the strongest only stumble through the number of their
days,
And the only true philosophy is trust ;
Where we spout our speculations, and we cry our babble lore,
And we wrangle, and we riot, and we quote,
Though we cannot see a glimmer of a light along the shore
That is watered by the wave that bears our boat.
Whence, O whence? and whither, whither?
What is all the lore we gather?
Man's a child, and God's a Father—
Trust the voyage to His hand !
Thence the calm assurance borrow,
Though we sail the sea of sorrow,
We shall sight a brighter morrow
In some other land.



Look Aloft.

Look aloft, and urge ahead, men,
Is the stern command we hear ;
Weep no more for what is fled, men—
That's not worth a maiden's tear.

There are no
Decrees of fate,
To grind the low,
And pet the great ;
Bosom-beauty guerdon's duty,
As in peasant so in peer ;
Fate is but the thing we've made, men,
By our deeds from year to year.

Look aloft, and make your labour
Jubilant with soul and song,
As you plunge the pruning sabre
Deep into the heart of wrong.
For all the lore
That lies infest
Must yield before
The highest, best.
Even nations' oscillations
Shall be steadied by the strong :
Heaven is earth's propitious neighbour—
Look aloft, and urge along.

Look aloft ! a line of glory
Wanders o'er the hazy sky,
Which, aye the sages hoary,
Is our virtues limned on high :
And every ill
That mortal lays,
Makes broader still
The genial blaze,
Till light supernal brings eternal
Bliss to crown attainments high :
Man has told but half his story—
Add your little ere you die !



Who are the Noble?

Pray, who are the noble, and where shall we find them?

Can high-sounding titles true greatness create?

Whate'er be the sphere to which heaven's assigned them,

The good and the wise are the noble and great.

The monarch whose aim is the weal of his nation,

The pure-hearted pauper to penury driven,

Regardless of rags, or monarchical station,

Command alike share of the favour of heaven.

Then why do we worship the money-proud minion,

And kiss his vain toe like a mind-fettered slave?

For gold is mere gold, and opinion, opinion,

While a man is a man, were he poor as the grave.

Nobility's wise words, brave deeds, and bright honour,

To which man, not *a man*, is the righteous heir;

And the life of the world is improved by the donor,

As all that are worthy lay claim to a share.

'Tis noble to breathe in impassioned orations

The truths that have dawned on the bard or the sage;

And mean are state dogmas, lean creeds, and persuasions,

To the guiding of youth with the wisdom of age.

'Tis noble to solace the needy and friendless,
And all that are crush'd 'neath oppression or care,
To lay the black demon of agonies endless,
And light up the bosom of sable despair.

'Tis noble to carefully weed from the bosom
The smallest of vices that longer survives,
And plant there the virtues that open and blossom,
To shed their sweet influence over our lives.

And all may be noble, though never so lowly ;
Be true to the duties that round thee await,
And know that thy mission is noble and holy,
As his who is wielding the sceptre of state.



“Who will fight for freedom?”

All the wise will “fight for freedom” for they love the glorious
name

With a love that beameth brighter than the stars ;

With a deep and burning fervour that shall set the world
afame,

And diffuse the light that shameth wordy wars.

Their sturdy strokes of thought erase the mind-retarding shams,

And the slavish fear that fetters fast the spirit that it damns

With vile and abject cringing to the mortal-made “I am’s,”

Who dedicate their pretty lives to ladies and cigars.

All the brave will “fight for freedom :” ay ! whatever they
may be—

Whether toilers in the factory, in the mine, or in the field—

They will guard, as with a flaming sword, the boon of liberty :

Who touches *that* will find full soon some arrows in his
shield !

Their potent words are those that live eternal as the mind,

That raise the heart to love the pure, the lofty, the refined,

That spread alike the truth that maketh brothers of mankind,

And that which robs the tyrants of the bloody thongs they
wield.

All the good will "fight for freedom," for 'tis generous minds
that seek

To impel the car of progress to the boundaries of the world ;
To shelter from all forms of wrong the humble and the weak,
And pluck the evils from the state to which they have been
hurled.

Firm, breast to breast, these best of men press forward to the
fray,

As for the weal of human kind they give their lives away,
And when the cheering masses shout the triumph of the day,
Then, haply then, but not till then, their banners shall be
furled.



Freedom.

The potent, warm, eternal love
Of freedom in the heart of man,
Is kindled by the breath of Jove,
And will not brook despotic ban ;
Whoever dares to quench the flame
Is branded with inglorious name.

When CÆSAR sought to rule the world
With even more than mortal might,
The giant arm of BRUTUS hurled
The grasping despot into night ;
Consigned the soul that peerless shone
To murky Styx and Acheron.

When GESSLER bound with gyves of brass
The Swiss at ALBERT's stern command,
There laid him low in woody pass
An arrow from a peasant hand ;
And mortals scorned the fool that fell,
And laurelled the immortal TELL.

When BONAPARTE's all-slakeless thirst
For lands that he could never own
Assigned him to a doom accurst
And made the fame of WELLINGTON,
We guerdoned with a glory crown
The man that struck the tyrant down.

And now, if some too haughty Lord
Who *plays* upon the land we *till*,
Would bend our spirits by his word,
And mould and grind us by his will
What wonder if we spurn his yoke,
And deal him answer stroke for stroke?

'Tis ours to go in triumph forth
From victories won to those afar,
And trample to the gory earth
Whoever tries our path to bar.
For freedom is a holy spell,
And noble hearts shall guard it well.

A Home Rule Song.

Another Rome, Britannia shares
Unprecedented sway ;
High over all, the name she bears
Is beaming brightest, best ;
The Mistress of the Nations wears
A diadem to-day,
Embossed with all the loves and prayers
And worship of the west.
And O, the love for fatherland
In patriotic me,
Has bid the burning breast expand
Till feeling's fount is full ;
But how I wish the days were dawned
When gladden'd we shall see
The friendly chat of SANDY, PAT,
And old JOHN BULL !

Here's to PADDY and his shamrock
And the land in which it grows !
Here's to SANDY and his thistle !
Here's to JOHN BULL and his rose !
They shall live in loved alliance yet
That time shall not annul,
And friendly chat will SANDY, PAT,
And old JOHN BULL !

'Twill come, though clashing creeds oppose,
 Though cancers of alloy
Eat out the very hearts of those
 By whom the gyves are worn ;
'Twill come ! a subtle current flows
 Where finer feelings lie,
By which, to succour Erin's woes,
 The olive branch is borne.
Even now some virgin glories grace
 The portals of the east,
And brighter streaks of sunlight chase
 The leaden sky and dull ;
'Tis the dawning smile on freedom's face,
 Rose-tinted, beauty-fleeced—
'Tis the coming chat of SANDY, PAT,
 And old JOHN BULL !

From common foeman's dripping blade
 They fall to common fate ;
Their blood and limbs long-blent, pervade
 The fields of common fame ;
And those on whose great hearts are laid
 The sorrows of a state,
Shall not for aye those hearts degrade
 By wrangling o'er a name.

For other woes and far more fell
Are looming in the air ;
And crash ! hope-shivering shot and shell
May break the blissful lull
That we have learned to love so well,
And warm into a prayer,
The friendly chat of SANDY, PAT,
And old JOHN BULL.

The harp that once in Erin's praise
Remembered music woke,
Shall breathe again in dulcet lays
The fire 'twas wont to feel :
While Caledonia hymns her braes,
And Britain hymns her oak,
That harp shall swell the songs they raise
And laud the common weal.
And thus concerted harps and hearts
Dissension's banner furled—
The soothing years shall balm the smarts,
And brighter garlands cull ;
And when the foe with arms or arts
Would mar their little world,
They'll crush his hat will SANDY, PAT,
And old JOHN BULL !

Here's to PADDY and his shamrock
And the land in which it grows !
Here's to SANDY and his thistle !
Here's to JOHN BULL and his rose !
They shall live in loved alliance yet
That time shall not annul,
And friendly chat will SANDY, PAT,
And old JOHN BULL !



The Castle that stands on the brow of the Side.

As I pensively pause on the lofty High Level
To muse on the mighty achievements of mind,
The fancy flees backward to wander and revel
In ages receding and drifting behind.
Loud-screeching the swift-locomotive speeds o'er me,
Beneath me the boats paddle Tyne's busy tide,
While sombre and sullen is frowning before me
The Castle that stands on the brow of the Side.
The sombre old Castle, the sullen old Castle,
The Castle that stands on the brow of the Side.

And as dreaming I gaze through the ages receding,
How rough the steep pathway of progress appears !
What framing, and moulding, and delving, and weeding,
The Castle has seen in the course of the years !
Though the beauty-conceptions of grace-giving GRAINGER
May gladden whoe'er through the city may stride,
Will be dearer, I deem, to tho lore-loving stranger,
The Castle that stands on the brow of the Side,
The lofty old Castle, the noble old Castle,
The Castle that stands on the brow of the Side.

For what stern-visaged men have beleaguered its doorway,
What virtue and vice have been hemmed in its halls,
What changes have come since red RUFUS of Norway,
Gave fashion and form to its storm-beaten walls !
And though cleaving the clouds as ambitious of heaven,
St. Nicholas ascends in the prime of his pride,
He disputes not the honour the ages have given
The Castle that stands on the brow of the Side.
The storm-beaten Castle, the time-honoured Castle,
The Castle that stands on the brow of the Side.

Though the crown of the Norman has waned and departed
To add to the spoils of the centuries past ;
Though the monarchs of men have its chambers deserted
For piles in the land more imposing and vast ;
On its soot-matted walls, as on temples of glory,
The eyes of the thoughtful enchanted abide ;
For it hues a rich page with a heart-thrilling story,
The Castle that stands on the brow of the Side.
The soot-matted Castle, the frowning old Castle,
The Castle that stands on the brow of the Side.

A Hymn to the Night.

Majestic night, thy crown of stars,
Bright-beaming through the depths of air,
Enkindles no unholy wars,
Nor passes down from heir to heir,
As do the jewel-spangled things
That glitter on the brows of kings!

To gaze upon thy dusky brow,
Spread wide as mortal eye can trace,
As fancy, lost in wonders now,
Skims the far ether-fields of space,
The vision bids the bosom swell
With thoughts too deep for words to tell.

For lo! the orbs that gem thy skies,
And radiant o'er their courses move,
Are like a thousand earnest eyes
All gazing o'er us in their love,
And blending their resplendent rays
To light us through life's checkered maze.

And when the moon in glory rides,
And bathes the world in mellow light,
And lover-haunted, valley tides
Flow gleaming in the effulgence bright,
A rapture to the heart is given
That makes us feel the earth a heaven.

But, O, thy pageantry of wrath !
When tempests rage and thunders roll,
And bolts of flame infest our path
And shake the chambers of the soul ;
The dread that such a moment brings
Avows thee fraught with awful things !

But yet, methinks, thy shifting hues
Are pictures meet of poet's mind ;
Now, tender as thy balmy dews,
Now, pouring wrath on all mankind !
And, musing thus, thy changeful mood,
Has peopled oft my solitude.

The Dawn of Love.

Whilom in beauty-pencilled bower,
In autumn's gold and russet prime,
They lingered one transcendent hour,
Resplendent hour,
Of drifted time.
Above, th' unruffled sky was still ;
Around, the corn was in the sheaves ;
And flickered o'er the haunted rill
The shadows of the falling leaves,
And bosom-stirred,
The dreamers heard
The burning word
That love believes.

The glory-crested moon was high,
And shone with such deluging light,
The eye could trace, now sitting by,
Now flitting by,
The birds of night.
The berried-bank, the odoured wood,
Ascending, kissed the lofty sheen ;
Then sloping stooped to verge the flood
That babbled by their couch of green.

And lips confessed
The hearts were blest
That, bounding, guessed
What love could mean.

The beacon of a mystic power
Through Eden-scenes their fancies led,
And held them till the gladdening hour,
The maddening hour,
Deluding sped.
They rose, they left their bower of bliss,
To revel in the rapture rare,
Of softest word and warmest kiss—
For he was young and she was fair—
Or learn how rife
Are woes and strife,
And prove in life
What love can bear !



Whoever sees her blesses her.

There breathes to bless one heart alone
A form of peerless worth,
Whose spirit-sheen is scarcely known
Beyond her own glad hearth ;
But there her life flows gushing forth
To gladden who caresses her,
And in that sphere of holy cheer
Whoever sees her blesses her.

Her quiet lot is pent between
The humble and the high ;
But there is in her lofty mien
And love-diffusing eye,
A soul-enthraling majesty,
And nothing mean possesses her—
And this her praise where'er she strays
Whoever sees her blesses her.

'Tis not because her teeming brain
Is rich with gathered lore ;
Nor that the smiling graces reign
In her, and only her ;
But for her love of passing o'er
The sorrow that distresses her,
To soothe the smarts of other hearts
Whoever sees her blesses her.

Sigh on ye Soft Zephyrs.

Sigh on ye soft zephyrs 'mong Derwent's wild bowers,
And dance, ye bright eddies that whirl on her stream ;
Expand your gay petals, ye sweet-breathing flowers,
My soul is enthralled with a beautiful dream.

Ye point me to days when with purest devotion
A maid young and blooming I strained to my heart,
And felt the warm thrill of affection's emotion .
As from their deep fountains the tear-drops would start.

Exult, ye wild groves while the daisies are springing,
And Derwent's glad waters leap o'er the bright sand ;
For here, while the lark and the mavis were singing,
The bard and his BETSY have walked hand-in-hand.

When sailing in splendour the moon was diffusing
Her beams in profusion athwart the blue sky,
The depth of your shades was the place of our choosing
The haunt of our love and the shrine of our joy.

And there while the stars in their silence gazed o'er us,
And summer winds sighed 'mong the long, leafy boughs,
How fair was the future hope pictured before us !
What fervour of feeling was breathed in our vows !

And now, as I muse on the verge of thy river,
The joy is abiding the moments impart :
The Vale of the Derwent shall charm me for ever,
Her woods and her hills are the home of my heart.

Chopwell Woods.

Ye wild arcades, thick-mantled green,
As musing 'neath your shades I stray,
A glow, as from the inner sheen,
Bright-shimmering sunnies o'er the scene,
Whose beauty wakes my grateful lay,
And thrills the breast, with memories blest,
And bright as joy's effulgent ray,
Whose light benign shall burn and shine
When surging years have ebb'd away.

How charmed the morning's virgin blush,
That found me in your tangled maze,
When loud, the silver-throated thrush
Flung from the brightly blooming bush
His rapture breathing matin lays ;
While zephyr bore the balmy store
From clover mead and primrose braes,
And birds and flowers beguiled the hours,
Of silent thought and silent praise.

And glad the glow of sunset flush,
That crimsoned half the shadowy sky ;
Or star-crowned night's pathetic hush
That woke the finer passion-gush

And joyous spirit melody ;
For then I found your hallowed ground
The sacred haunt of musings high :
There seemed a mind in every wind
That soothing, sighing, rustled by.

And when the vapours of the mind
Arose to darken or depress ;
Or I had mourned too much to find
That mortals were not always kind,
Or friendship wore delusive dress ;
Your balm and bloom dispelled the gloom
Of indefinable distress,
When nature smiled upon her child
In all her wealth of loveliness.

And now that time has schooled my heart
To frame its feelings into song,
And laugh away the petty smart
That petty evils may impart,
As, calm or storm, I urge along ;
My latent love of mead and grove
Grows more and more intensely strong ;
Yet I attest I love you best
Of all the scenes I've roved among.

Wild, shady miles of ferns and flowers,
O'er which the tiny cony scuds,
And where the happy pair embowers
To chat away the honied hours,
And sniff the scent of sprouting buds !
When death's dark night blots out the light
That radiant on my vision floods,
My latest sigh shall be—good-bye
To mother earth and Chopwell Woods !



Come, my Betsy.

Come, my Betsy, blue-eye sweetheart, zephyr murmurs softly
by,

And the moon's benign effulgence floods the glen,

And the stars are beaming brightly from their ebon thrones
on high,

As if smiling on the hallow'd loves of men.

To yon sylvan scenes I'll lead thee, where the violets sweetly
blow,

Where the woodbine hangs in tassels and perfume,

And above the blue forget-me-nots the virgin roses glow,

And the slopes surrounding laugh with vernal bloom.

There, secluded from intrusion, thou shalt nestle to my breast

While the moon deluges Derwent with its beams,

Like an angel in elysium with her pinions laid at rest,

Smiling in the holy transport of her dreams.

From the fountain of deep feeling we shall drink a holy joy,

Taste a rapture soul-exulting and divine ;

And I'll read thy love's deep meaning on the azure of thine
eye,

As I pour my bosom's fulness into thine.

For I love thee, dearest Betsy, thou art more than wealth to
me—

Thou art life, and light, and sunshine to my day ;

Like a vision blest to guide and cheer me o'er life's troubled
sea,

Thy bright image rose and will not pass away.

Betsy Bee.

How sweet to rove the violet grove
When honied woodbine scents the air,
And flies the thrush from bush to bush
Loud-pouring music everywhere !
But sweeter when the eve is dun,
And sol has sank beneath the sea,
The craze of frenzied life to shun
And while the hours with BETSY BEE.

For then the earth unfolds her worth
And vies with Eden's spotless shore,
And bids us taste the pleasures chaste
That we ne'er dreamt she held before.
O ! life has still one draught of bliss,
From every foul ingredient free :
'Tis in the converse and the kiss,
And plighted faith of BETSY BEE.

Let fools adore the glittering store
And vain ambition pant for praise ;
Add to the shares of selfish heirs,
Whate'er their gloating sight surveys ;
But give to my extended arms
And yearning bosom fond and free,
In all her soul-enthralling charms
The comely form of BETSY BEE.

Spring.

'Tis the sigh of the spring that I hear in the breeze,
 'Tis the dawn of her smile on the sky ;
And the skirt of her robes on the woods and the leas
 Are imprinting their spangle and dye.
And the beam of her brow, and the bloom of her cheek,
 And the balm of her breath on the plain,
Like a hope in the heart of the weary and weak,
 Are diffusing their grandeur again.

For she comes with a wreath evergreen on her brows,
 To re-open the buds and the flowers ;
And a censer aroma'd she flings as she throws
 Her ambrosial balm on the bowers.
And the life-giving touch of her sweet-huing hand
 Is augmenting our quota of bliss ;
While the tints on the ocean, the sky, and the land,
 Are the beauty-imprints of her kiss.

From the land of the myrrh, from the home of the vine,
 From her own sunny seat in the south,
In her hand she comes bearing the corn and the wine,
 And the songs of great joy in her mouth.
She has come, and the woods shall resound with her praise,
 And the hills shall re-echo the strain,
And the burns, and the groves, and the vales, and the braes,
 Shall be spangled with glory again.

Then awake ! shackled heart from the thrall of thy woes
Throw the pall and the burthen away ;
There's a cordial for care in the bloom of the rose,
And a life in the wood choir's lay.
And however the tempests of trouble oppose,
There is always a hope on the wing,
As the bright-gleaming gems on the bosom of snows
But reflect the near glance of the spring.



Who shall weep when I am Dead?

When the withered leaves shall rustle
O'er the mound that wraps my clay ;
When my worn-out brain and muscle
Moulder in their last decay ;
When the snows all pure and pearly
Mantle o'er my pillow'd head ;
When the winds are high and surly
Who shall weep beside my bed ?

When the spring comes, all perfuming,
Laughing over lawn and lea ;
When the early flowers are blooming
Where the buried memories be ;
When the summer swathes with gladness
All that winter hues with gloom ;
Summer joy, or autumn sadness
Who shall weep beside my tomb ?

When my harp is hushed for ever,
When the muse's wearied wing
Waves no more in warm endeavour
O'er the frayed and broken string ;
When these rudely-woven numbers
Deep in dark oblivion lie,
Who shall breathe above my slumbers
Undissimulated sigh ?

Budding spring, and blooming summer,
Autumn rich, and winter brave,
Shall, saluting death's new comer,
Bring their tributes to my grave ;
And when all the winds of heaven
Sigh above my dreamless bed,
O ! ye odoured dews of even !
Ye shall weep when I am dead.

F i n i s .



Barnstable

Sep 26. 88

My dear

I have received your note &
p.o. with thanks. I will remit it to the
Auction. I feel sure you will enjoy the poems
The Poem on the Derivatives. so far the best I have
yet seen on the subject. Among the minor poems
I enjoy "Singing away", "Over the Sea",
"The Soldier's Home as home". Especially
"The Children of the Street". If this had been
written by Tennyson, it would have created a
sensation. As my friend, A Home Sweet
Song, where Mr Gladstone says "does more harm
both to his talent and feeling". The Castle that
Stands on the ruin of the Peace. &c. &c.
I am glad you have purchased him, as I am
sure he is worthy. The Poems are not quite
of another. But I think their language far exceeds
their defects

Yours truly

John T. Robinson

